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HOUBIGANT SHOWROOM
BY VAHAN HAGOPIAN

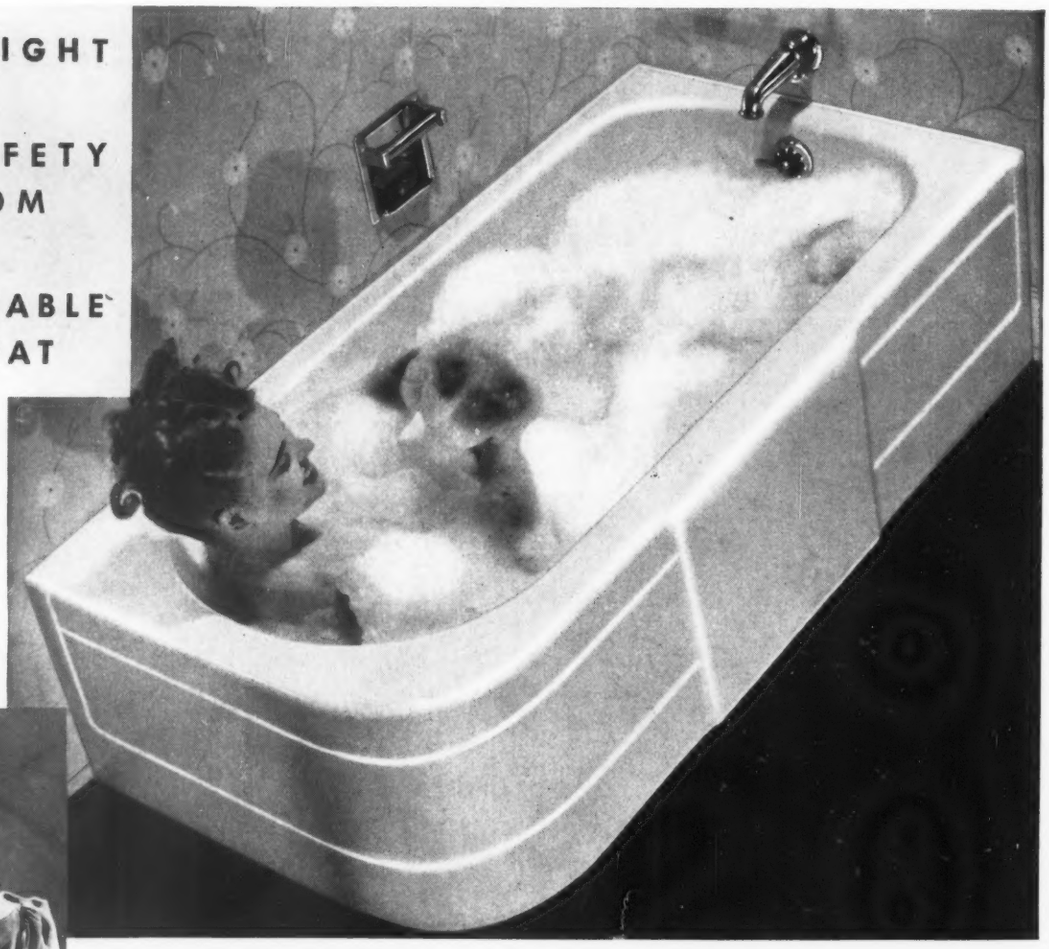
NOVEMBER

PENCIL POINTS

1938

The New CRANE CORONOVA
has these Features

LOW HEIGHT
•
FLAT SAFETY BOTTOM
•
COMFORTABLE RIM SEAT



Low height, only sixteen inches, means greater ease in stepping in and out.

FOR the bathroom in the modern home, the Crane *Coronova* offers architects a bathtub, new in design—streamlined in appearance—comfortable, safe—ideal for either a tub bath or shower.

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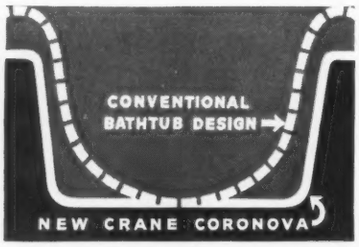
The Crane *Coronova* is made of the finest Crane Porcelain on cast iron and may be had in both recessed or corner styles in any of the Crane standard colors. The *Coronova* is available through any Plumbing Contractor and on display at all Crane Branches.

Wide front panel provides a comfortable seat. Convenient when dressing or when foot bathing.



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PENCIL POINTS

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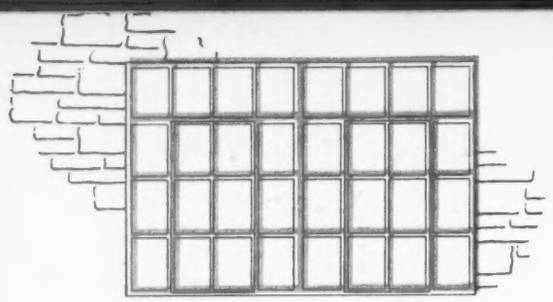

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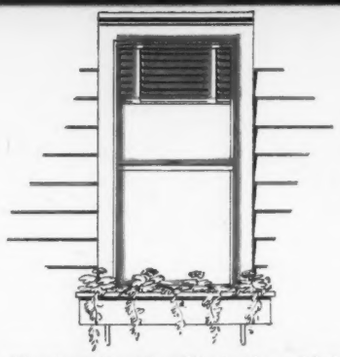

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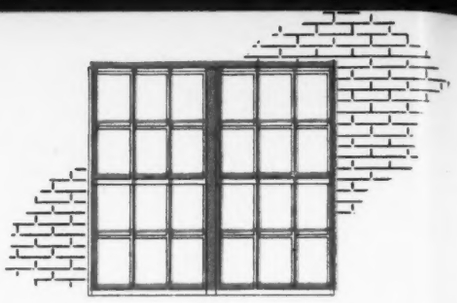

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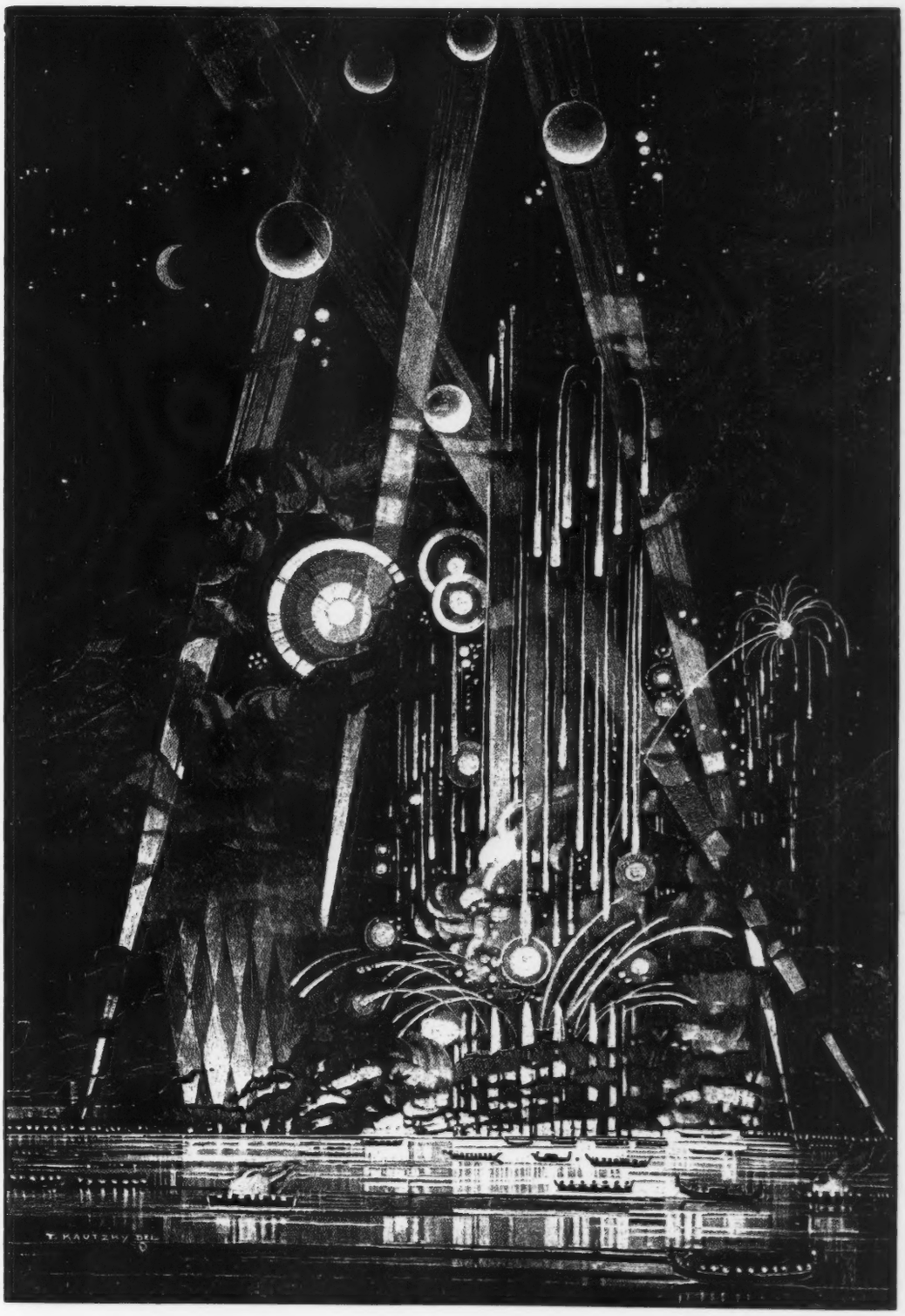
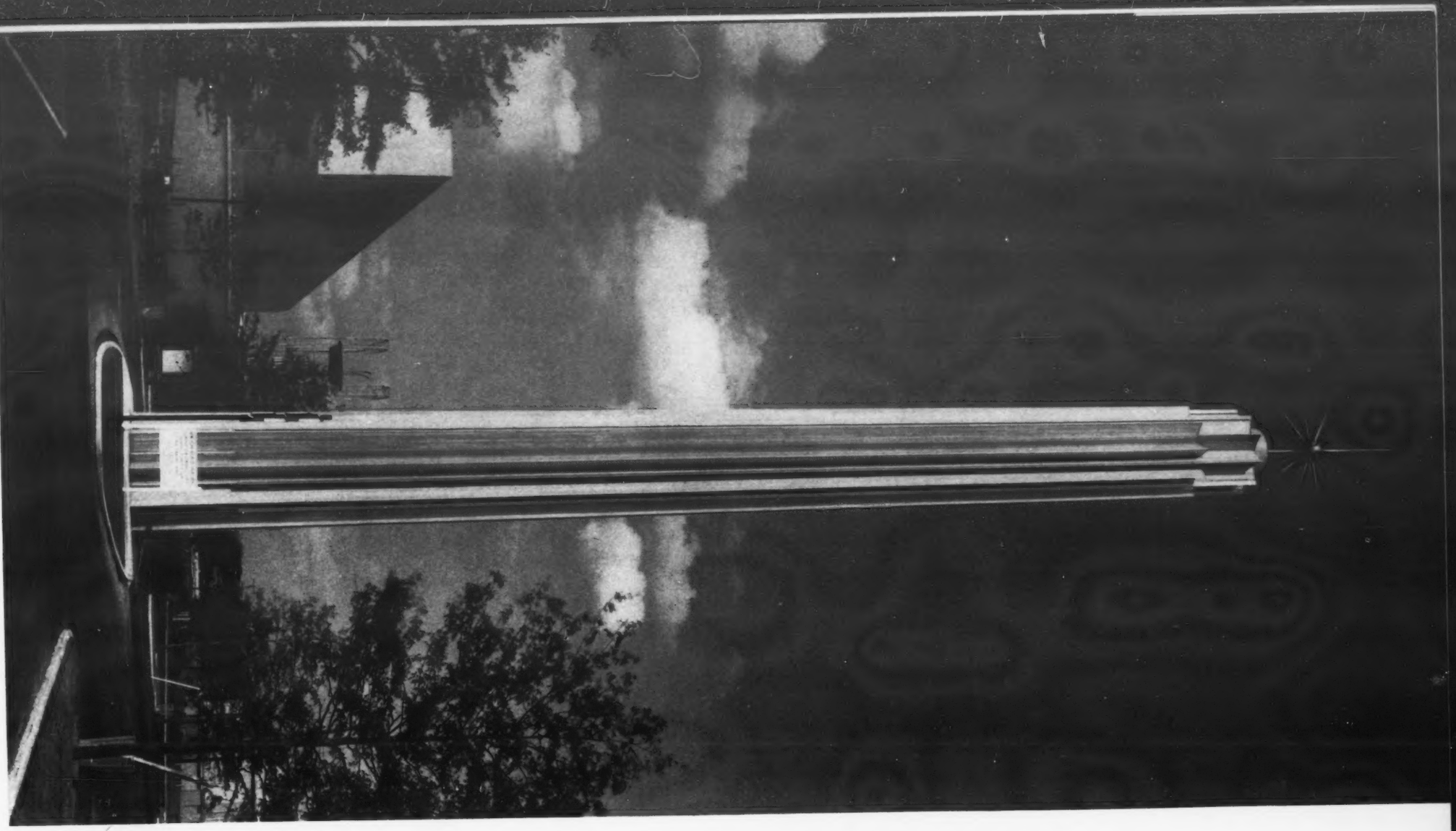


AT THE NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR 1939

THEODORE KAUTZKY has here depicted, not an invasion from Mars, but a future fireworks display to take place at the New York World's Fair in 1939. The drawing, a delightful bit of fantasy, was made for the Fair corporation to illustrate the lavishness of the pyrotechnics projected for the exposition. It was drawn on scratchboard with a pebbled surface which permitted the development of interesting textures. Incidentally, Kautzky's recent water colors will be on display at the Argent Galleries, 42 West 57th Street, in New York from Nov. 28 to Dec. 10



"THE STAR PYLON" AT NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR, 1939

FRANCIS KEALLY AND LEONARD DEAN, ARCHITECTS. PHOTO BY RICHARD WURTS

WORLD'S FAIRS 1939 MODEL

BY TALBOT F. HAMLIN

Work on both the American World's Fairs of 1939, at New York and San Francisco, is now far enough along to allow the general shape to be seen, to make it possible to recognize their general lineaments, and to compare their extremely different conceptions. It is, of course, still too early to judge in detail, or to evaluate individual buildings; yet the general character of both is now clear.

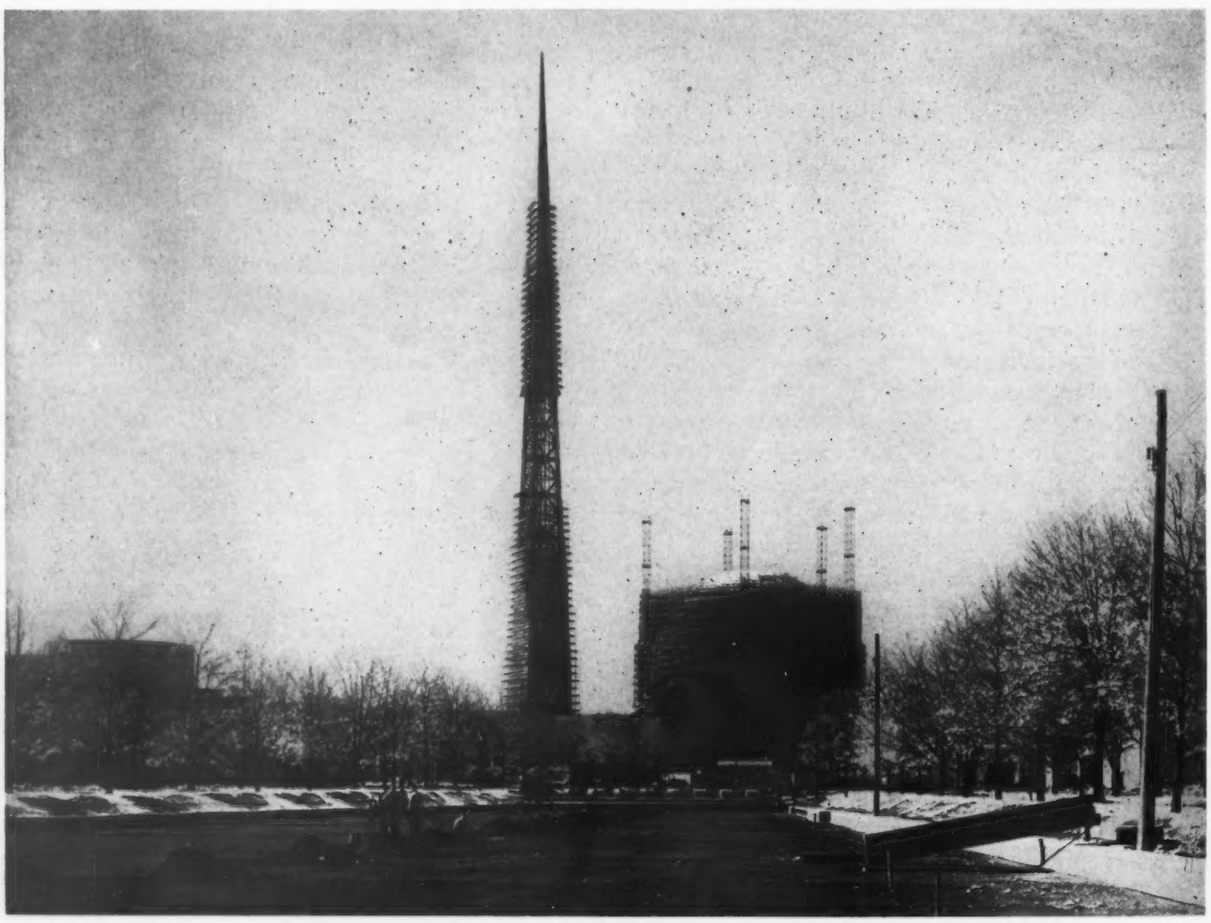
The first and most impressive fact of the New York World's Fair is the miracle of the redemption of the Flushing swamps and the extraordinary evidence which this bears to man's conquest of brute material. To one who knew that noisome and smelly waste before, the new land, the ordered lakes and canals which are gradually taking shape, and even the trees which are already growing and many of which will form a part of the permanent park which is to come as well as of next year's Fair, must all seem a near miracle. Moreover, as the smoking rubbish dumps of Riker's Island are little by little torn apart and transferred to fill the great new airport at North Beach, as the new sewage disposal plants at College Point and Ward's Island come more and more into action, one can see even the possibility of the redemption of the foul shores of Flushing Bay itself. These things alone would almost make the effort put into the World's Fair worth while, and one may be glad that its by-products are to continue as blessings for the citizens of New York for decades to come.

The general plan of the New York Fair is too well known to warrant extended description, but with the completion of many of the buildings and much of the preliminary planting its meaning and general effect are becoming clear enough to justify a more careful examination. One of the aims of the plan adopted was the rapid distribution of people coming by various means—automobiles, two subway stations, the Long Island Railroad, and the Bay. The plan adopted gives a system of broad circulations from each center to be fed by one of these means. In this very openness of circulation lies one of the difficulties of the plan. People will manifestly be distributed rapidly, but distributed where? On each road or path which they take they will meet and cross other crowds of people being distributed from other centers, and it would seem that the problem of really seeing the Fair, of taking in its varied exhibitions in an orderly manner, may be rendered almost insoluble by the resultant confusion.

Another question of circulation which seems but partly solved is the approach from Flushing Bay itself. With the probable crowding of other means of transit, it is, I believe, inevitable that there will be a great development of water-borne traffic direct from Manhattan Island to the Fair; in the summer months such a method of approach would certainly be the most pleasant. The Fair is furnishing a large boat harbor and landing space, but the connection of these elements with the Fair seems at the present confused and over-long. It is a matter of regret that the subway and the Long Island Railroad prevented a closer tie between the Fair proper and its waterfront; with Flushing Bay redeemed, and with the views across it so picturesque and varied, one can but wish that somehow the Fair itself could have been led, over or under the subway and railroad tracks, straight to the water. In Chicago, in 1893, the joining of the lake and the lagoon, the feeling of the lake water carrying through the entire design, was one of the qualities which gave that Fair its extraordinary success as a general plan. In Chicago, in 1932, the lake front was largely forgotten and became merely a back door to building after building. The New York Fair has avoided the error made six years ago in Chicago, but it has not succeeded in gaining the brilliant openness and unity which close connection to the waterfront gave the Columbian Exposition.

It is likely that the largest crowds will come

Looming up at either end of the main axis of the Fair are the Federal Building by Howard L. Cheney, Architect, and the now familiar Perisphere and Trylon Theme Center by Harrison and Fouillhoux. These views were taken from about midway between the two where Rainbow Avenue intersects with Constitution Mall



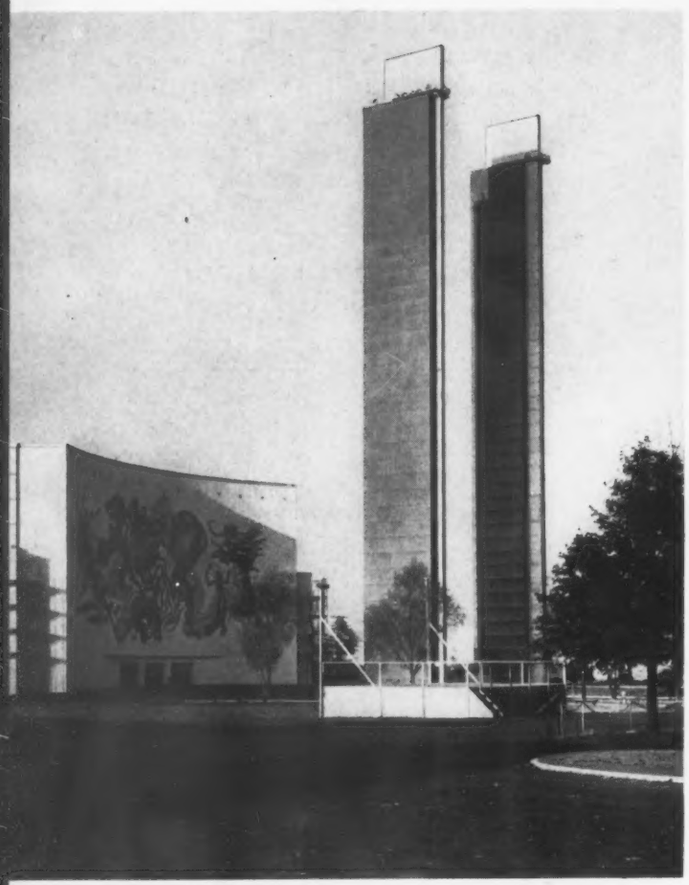
from the Long Island Railroad and the new Fair Station of the Flushing subway. It also seems likely that the greater number of these people will start at once for the Perisphere and the Trylon, the great forms of which dominate the lower buildings around. This center is obviously the crux of the whole plan, and just how the crowds pouring into this circle from so many directions are to know which way to turn and *how* to get *where* is still an interesting question. Besides, the actual architectural composition of the buildings bordering on the radiating streets which lead up to the central circle is in every case confused, so that the first impression of the Fair upon the new arrival may well be one of puzzlement rather than of satisfaction. The old well-known city planning difficulties of the *rond-point* system and the awkwardness of the wedge-shaped building sites it is likely to give are nowhere better seen.

Once the *rond-point* is reached, however, the magnificent scale of the central axis from Perisphere to Government Building must be obvious to anyone. Here the plan of the Fair is at its best, and the views from either end or from any point along the sides, up and down the axis, are compelling and fine. At one end the great sphere rises, remarkably effective today surrounded as it is with a lacy scaffold through which its impressive size and its beautiful curving surfaces are visible. With these scaffolds it has superb scale; it is a fitting termination to the half-mile vista. One wonders if without them it will seem to have the same commanding size, and whether there will be in close relationship to it enough details of human scale to make its grandeur of dimension intelligible.

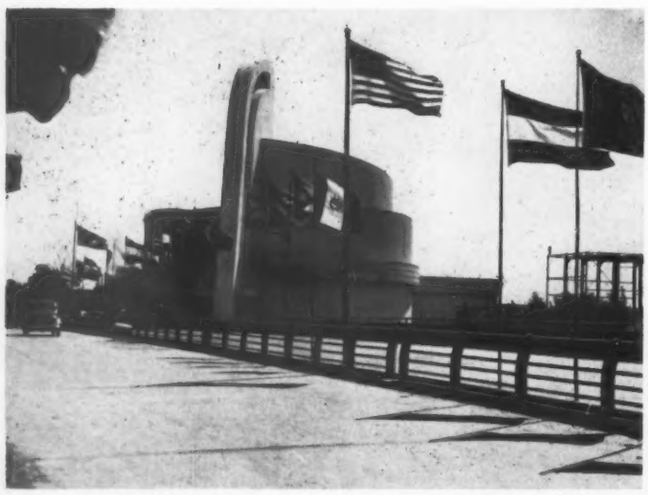
In the other direction the large forms of the United States Government Building are taking shape, and I know of no example which shows so well as this the importance of an understanding of the site and the site problems in building design and building criticism. Taken by itself, the Government Building, with its blocky end towers and its great central colonnade, is obvious, almost banal. At the end of the great axis, however, its monumental, symmetrical composition is magnificent and its very geometric simplicity has a power sufficient to give the climax that its position demands. Thus at the ends of this great axis rise geometrical forms basically simple, yet so different from each other—one all curves, the other all rectangles—that their very difference adds to the power of each. Between will be chiefly water and trees, and even today in the preliminary state it is the trees which line and delimit the view. Behind them the buildings on each side of the axis are, in some cases fortunately enough, almost entirely concealed. My only fear is that the carnival of colossal sculpture which is to decorate this vista will merely fog its clarity, diminish its scale, and reduce it to a series of little parts.

The buildings at the Fair seem to divide themselves naturally into three entirely different groups—the Fair-built structures, the foreign buildings, and the exhibitors' buildings. These are scattered about without any clearly recognized demarcation, and the result is at times confusing. The Fair-built structures are largely of the simple, "packing box" type, with unbroken walls, frequent colonnades of square piers, and little or no attempt to differentiate them according to the type of exhibit they are to contain. There is an almost complete dependence on artificial light, which from the exhibit point of view may be wise but from the standpoint of exterior design leads to sterility and lack of interest. They are frankly enclosures for rentable space; whatever æsthetic effect they have must come largely from color treatment and applied mural painting and sculpture. Considered from this point of view, the simplest of them, like the Mines and Metallurgy Building and the Chemical Building, seem the most satisfactory; yet with what relief one comes upon the curved glass bay which projects into the court on the easterly side of the main axis, or the passage through the Electrical Communications Building with its outside stair and open loggia above! Another of the Fair-built structures which has unusual interest is that for Building Materials, where there is a really knowing and simple use of curves in the plan and a nice variety in the contrast of wall and loggia. The character of the circular entrance porch with its slim supports which slant out delicately is also excellent, with just the right touch of gaiety without loss of dignity. The Aviation Building, too, with its vast open shell and its interesting conical forms, is alive, imaginative, and expressive of its content and its purpose.

In the effort to lend interest to the "packing box" buildings, some have been given domes or rotundas, breaks, extensive colonnades, cupolas, and what not. In almost every case these additions have been disastrous, having neither monumentality nor gaiety, taking away from the simplicity, and producing confusion instead of interest. Particularly unfortunate in this respect are two of the buildings near the foot of the main axis (the Food and



Directly above is seen the principal end of the Communications Building, designed by Francis Keally and Leonard Dean, with its mural by Eugene Savage and its twin pylons. Below appears the Electric Products Building, for which Walker & Gillette were the Architects, as viewed across the so-called Bridge of Flags. Above, at the right, is Dwight James Baum's Shelter Building



McGraw Hill Photo

Fisheries Buildings) and the Shelter Building with its colonnade and little cupola and its Paris 1925 engaged "columns."

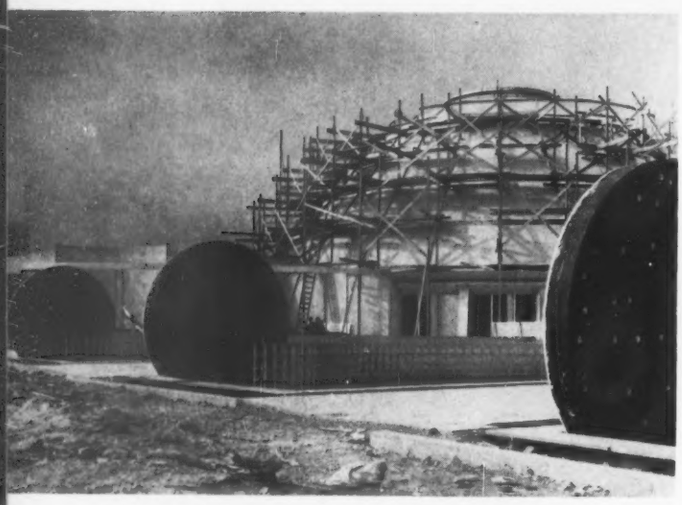
If the Fair-built structures are inclined to be stodgy, the exhibitors' buildings frequently suffer from the reverse quality. Again and again in these the designers seem to have suffered from attacks of acute circularitis or spiralitis. Here, in very truth, we have displayed a strange new rococo plan sense, as though the one unforgivable crime were a straight wall or a right angle. Curves in plan of all sorts run into each other; walls twist like snakes; and in one amazing example even the lines of the elevation are handled in the same way, so that the whole resembles nothing so much as a rather elaborate roller coaster and needs only the addition of plaster icicles and stucco rocks to take its place perfectly in some rather superior Coney Island. Curves in plan are of course an entirely legitimate element. They can be made generators of exquisite interior space and exteriors rich with changing light and shade; yet curves in plan without meaning, without reason, without straight lines to balance them, to tie them down and give them contrast and distinction, become merely confusing and characterless. It is the old error of the *art nouveau* transferred from details of doors and windows to the basic problems of plan.

These curves, which wiggle over so large an area of the plan, are all the more confusing laid out on the comparatively formal straight lines of the basic general plan; and, so far as I could see, there is but one place where the curves of buildings seem to work together to produce grace and harmony—that is in the little open space between the back of the Consolidated Edison Company, the Glass Building, and the end of the Mines and Metallurgy Building. In general, it is as though there had been on the part of the designers such a fear

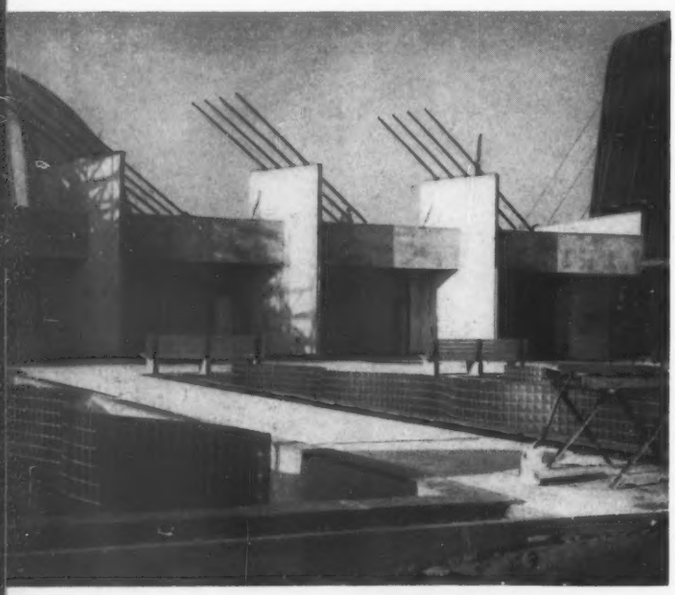
The Automotive Transportation Building, designed by the office of James Gamble Rogers, lent itself well to this dramatic photograph by Richard Wurts. It forms the southwestern termination of the Fair's principal axis

of repetition that rhythm is lost, and the eye longs in vain for quiet lines and simple surfaces.

Yet many of the individual exhibitors' buildings are in themselves interesting and beautiful, and seem to have that combined quality of gaiety and open invitation which somehow means Fair. Thus the Glass Building (despite the fact that more glass in its design would have given it a greater and more expressive delicacy), the Borden's Milk Building, the Gas Building, all in their various ways, show remarkable qualities of imagination. The simplicity of the Consolidated Edison Building is pleasant, and the sharp angles, curved walls, and projecting tank-like shapes of the Petroleum Building are unusual and satisfactory. The Distilled Spirits Institute Building, with its low dome, its daring metal "banner," and its attractive garden with pools, fountains, and glazed entrances, has rare imaginative charm. The Steel Building is sharp and metallic; yet one would welcome a more imaginative study of the steel forms themselves, of the almost limitless grace and delicacy which the strength of steel permits. It is still too early to speak definitely of the great buildings for General Motors and for Ford. The former, particularly, gives promise of interest in mass and detail; yet it, like so many others, may



The Distilled Spirits Institute Building, designed by Morris Sanders, Architect, with Ross-Frankel, Inc., associated, gives promise of being exceptionally interesting



have too many curves, too many little details, and fall into confusion.

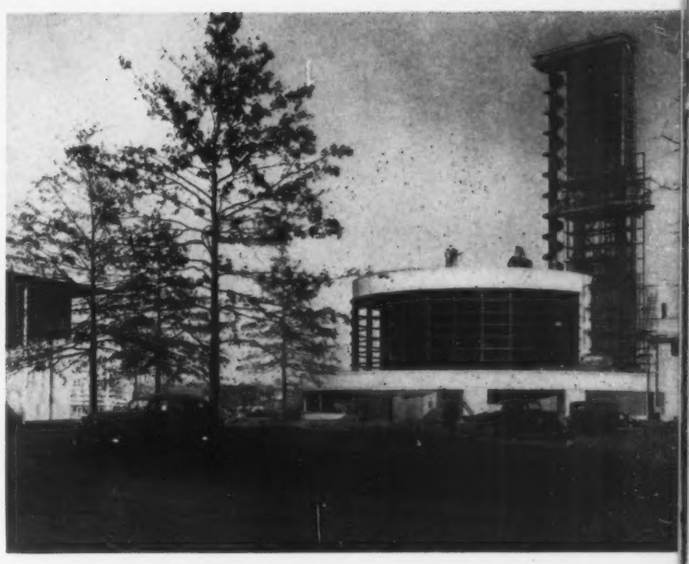
The foreign buildings are still only a maze of steel and foundations, but it is obvious that taken together they will form a group of great interest, quite different in character from the American buildings. Notably, they will make a much greater use of glass. They will be more like the buildings at Paris in 1937 or at Glasgow this past summer than like most of their American neighbors at the New York Fair. The contrast between the effect which they make and that made by the other buildings will be one of the most interesting things to study when the Fair is opened.

One of the most difficult problems in designing a Fair of such tremendous size is the problem of scale. In the larger elements, the Government Building and the Perisphere and Trylon, and the water that connects them, the scale seems, thus far, perfect; but more and more, as one wanders over the grounds, the scale both of general form and detail seems unduly large, inhuman. Particularly dangerous to human scale, it seems to me, are the enormous pylons which the designers seem so anxious to scatter broadcast around the Fair, without much rhyme or reason. These great forms, which flank so many of the doors and rise to break the skyline, are all too often heavy-handed, coarse, gargantuan. Again and again their effect is that of forms designed for buildings a quarter the size, as though the designer, thinking he was drawing to an eighth or a quarter-inch scale, was really working on a sixteenth or a thirty-second inch scale. What should be delicate is heavy, what should be refined is coarse; and, instead of focusing interest on the entrance, these forms merely diffuse interest and confuse the pattern. The details of the fountain work on the central axis seem to suffer from the same disease. Basically conventional in shape, these vases, parapets, and fountain borders have neither the impressiveness of the really colossal nor the delicacy of good garden work; but yet, of these, too, it is impossible to speak definitely until the water is running and the basins are full.

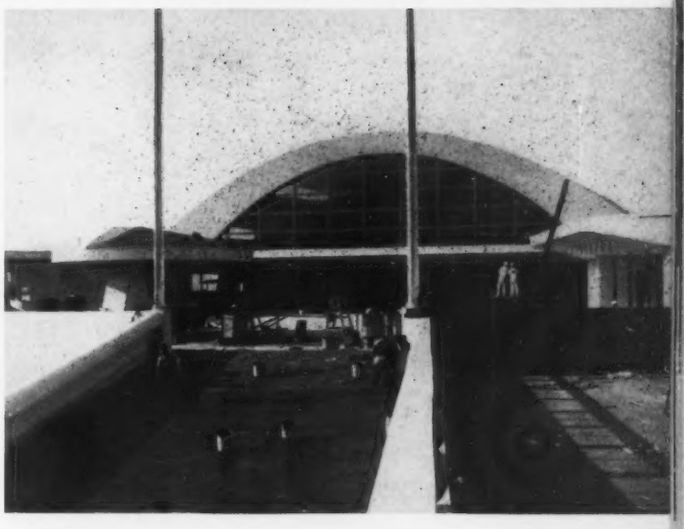
The same scale difficulty runs through much of the mural painting and sculpture which is already in place. It is as though the artist, used to painting easel pictures or overmantel decorations, were completely lost when confronted with a wall a hundred feet long and thirty feet high. Great figures, overscaled, bear down upon the poor humans who scurry by beneath. The paintings fall generally into two types—the conventional classi-

cized allegorical figures one associates with the mural decoration of public buildings of the past; and vast and rather incoherent groups of strained and often contorted figures in agitation, with every muscle emphasized and outlined. The sculpture so far in place frequently takes the form of figures in full relief bracketed out from the flat walls of the buildings, with little architectural meaning. This fragility of connection between building and decoration should indicate, one would think, sculpture of lightness and delicacy, if not of frivolity; instead, one finds in practically all cases heavy, archaized classic solidity. There are pleasant exceptions in both painting and sculpture; particularly I remember a long relief in many kinds of shining metal, and two charming, simple painted figures, on the Communications Building. In many cases, however, instead of humanizing the buildings, the decoration often seems to achieve the reverse. Yet of course no fair criticism of the painting and sculpture as a whole is possible until much more of it is in place and the entire color scheme of the Fair complete. So far, there seems to be little to cause one to throw his hat into the air and cheer.

Of the minor work, which will do so much to set the character of the Fair as a whole—information booths, and so on,—one interesting example is completed, an information booth in shiny corrugated metal. This is one of the most successful things yet to be seen at the Fair. Light and gay, it is nevertheless simple and efficient, and if all of the similar elements can be as lovely and attractive as this the effect of the whole Fair will be enormously enlivened and beautified. Much of the planting that has been done in various portions of the grounds is exquisite, and when the bare spaces are filled with such fascinating combinations of foliage, of fanciful little fountain elements, the whole is bound to be alive and attractive. Some of the bridges which the Fair has built have a similar quality of light, gay elegance. One other building, as yet uncompleted, deserves notice for its simple, direct beauty—the new Long Island Railroad Station. With its sweeping, lovely curves, its ample glass areas, it forms an admirable approach; and the way its open mouth debouches on a wide ramp, the curves of which harmonize so well with the shape of the station, is not only a perfect expression of function but also in itself a lovely thing to look upon. This whole entrance way to the Fair is remarkably impressive, and the final touch of distinction is given to it by the slim wooden tower, bearing a metal star, which stands at the bottom



Glass, Inc., Building, by Shreve, Lamb and Harmon; General Motors by Norman Bel Geddes & Co., Inc.; L. I. R. R. Station by Messrs. Radoslovich and Barzaghi

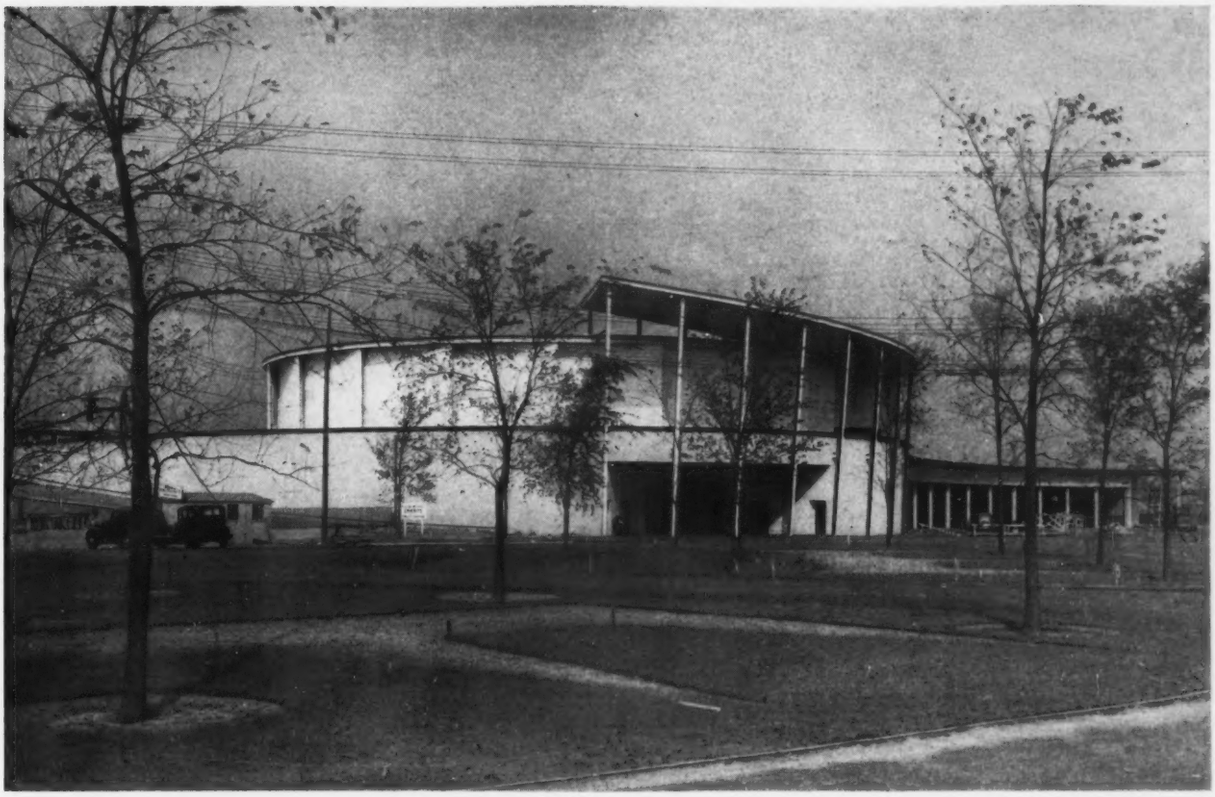


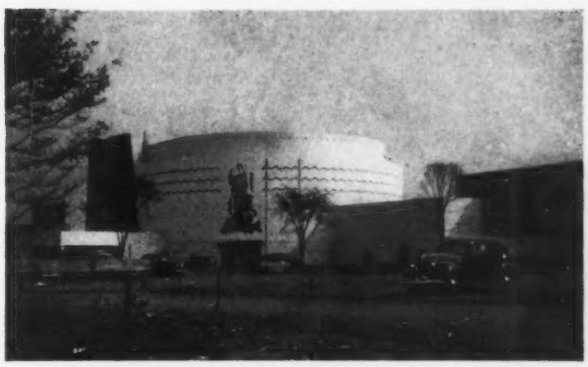
Richard Wurts

A row of fountains known as "Aqualons" were designed by the Board of Design to ornament and enliven some of the planted areas. Below is a bit of mural decoration by James Owen Mahoney on the Communications Building

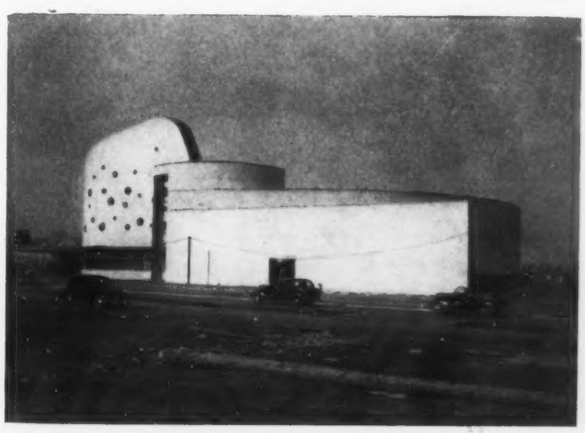
of the ramp, on its axis. This tower is one of the few elements which successfully combine Fair gaiety with dignity, and great size with humanity of details and true delicacy.

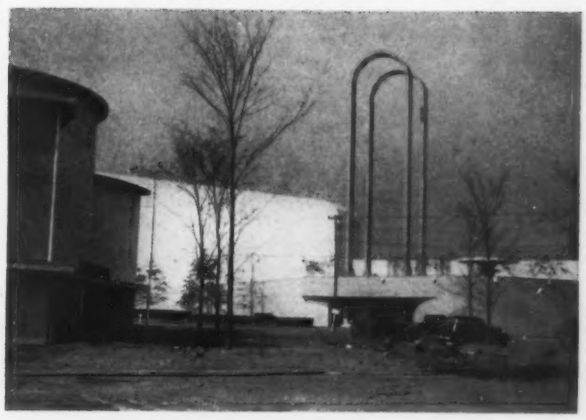
In a recent, widespread piece of publicity, the Fair announced that its fireworks exhibition would be the nearest approach to chaos which mankind had ever produced. Let us hope that this spirit is not the controlling spirit in the completion of the Fair, nor in the design of even its evanescent activities. The glory of the fountains and the color and the fireworks of the Paris Fair lay precisely in the fact that all were so definitely formed, so exquisitely patterned, so thoroughly made—each one—a work of creative art. The New York Fair has also stated that in all of these elements its own achievements will far surpass those of Paris. It will never do so by producing chaos, either in buildings or in fireworks; it will only succeed if, in all the remaining work of building, of decoration, of design of sound, color, and light, it is patterned and beautiful form, and not chaos, which is the end in view.





The Building Materials Building (above) had five architects associated on its design:—Robert W. McLaughlin, Arthur C. Holden, Stamo Papadaki, John C. B. Moore, and Jean Labatut. The Food Building (right) was done by M. W. Del Gaudio with Aspinwall & Simpson associated. The Continental Baking Company turned to Skidmore & Owings as its architects for the design below. The Textile Building (lower right) was done by two Frederick G. Frosts, Sr. and Jr., and Ward Fenner





Eugene Savage's mural on the Communications Building (above) and Carlo Ciampaglia's decoration on the rear of the Food Building exemplify the two general types of exterior paintings noted in the text, pages 678 and 679

The "Court of Reflections" was designed by Lewis P. Hobart for the San Francisco Golden Gate Exposition

THE San Francisco Fair, on Treasure Island in the Bay, is known to me only by pictures and the descriptions of some who visited it during the past summer. As a Fair it has one enormous advantage over New York—its much smaller and more human dimensions. This has of course simplified the scale problem in design greatly, and it has forced a much more systematic and concentrated type of plan, so that it will be possible to visit its exhibits easily and directly, without the necessity of crossing wide spaces between building and building. In this respect there is a certain resemblance to the San Francisco Fair of 1915, which was in a sense almost a return to the old one-building Fair conception of sixty years earlier; for in essence the San Francisco Fair of 1915 was but a single enormous shed, with a continuous rectangular exterior wall pierced by several great through avenues, and containing three colossal courts for rest and variety. In the new San Francisco Fair the plan is rather that of a long range of buildings around a great T-shaped court, with the arms of the T unequal. Thus the open spaces as well as the buildings are concentrated and definite. Behind this larger element, the smaller buildings of separate exhibitors, of the Pacific countries, and of the amusement concessions spread over the rest of the island. Yet even in their arrangement an attempt is made to carry through something of the feeling of controlled formality of plan which dominates the main group.

Once this plan *parti* was adopted, it followed that the basic architectural forms must be as continuous and simple as the plan itself; but in detail every imaginative license was permitted, every fantastic vagary sought. One feels that these architects took neither themselves nor their problems with undue seriousness; that they perhaps met together, dined gaily, and, filled with the pleasant warmth of a good dinner and good wine, let themselves go. Gaiety, phantasy, unreality were the watchwords. It is all strange and rather oriental, frankly basing itself at times on East Indian precedent; yet it uses this precedent in no archæological way, but merely as a kind of springboard for the imagination.

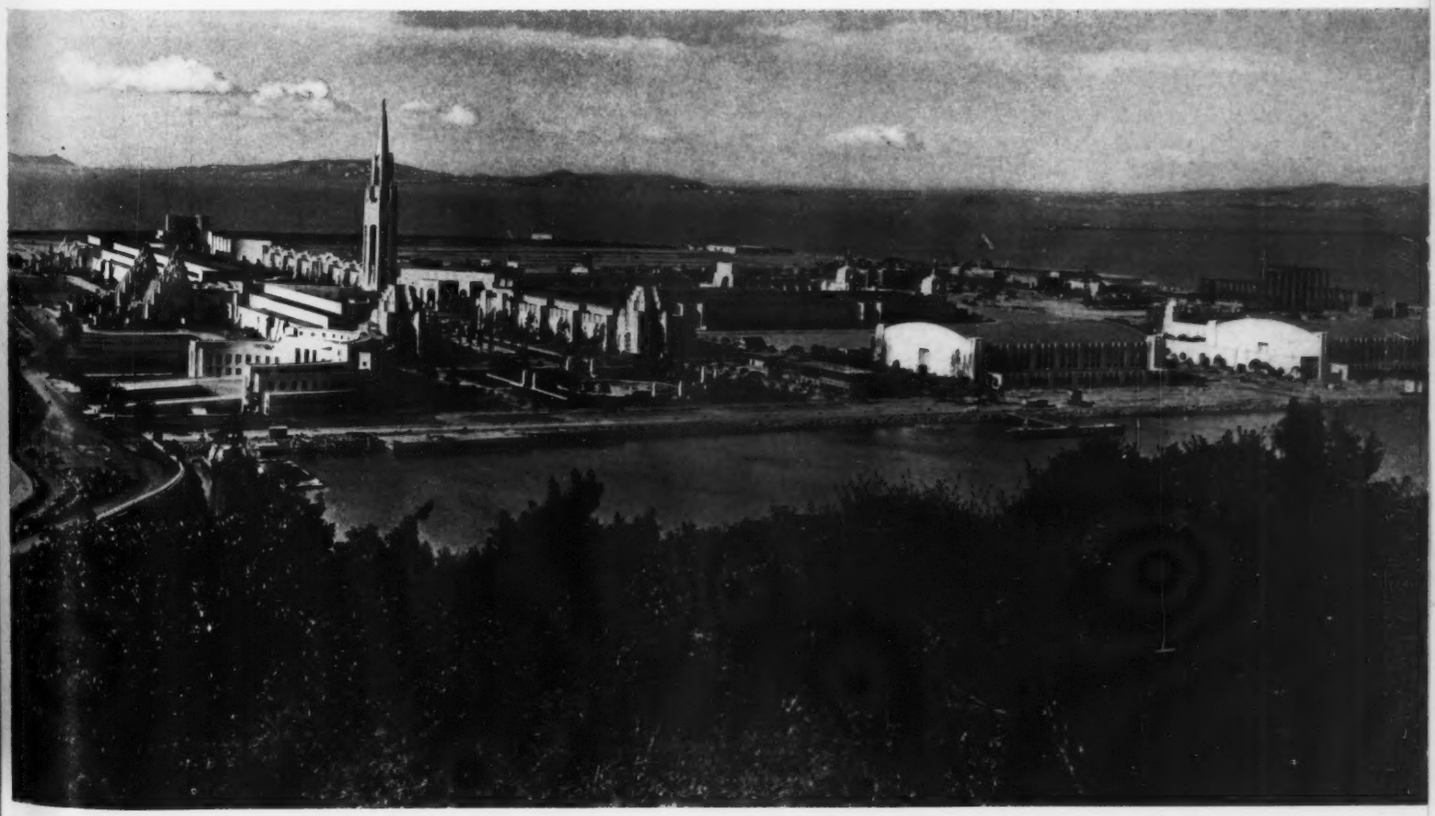
In front of buildings of this kind, the ordinary canons of architectural criticism seem almost powerless. It is as though the architects could say to any serious observer, "Come, come, we were building a Fair, not architecture; we were building the West's dream,

684 STAIRS TO EAST TOWER. W. G. MERCHANT, ARCHITECT; JACQUES SCHNIER, SCULPTOR

something that the farmer or the cowboy or the citizen could see for two or three glorious days and nights, and carry home to be the memory of a fairy tale."

Now this is all very frivolous, of course, and far from the serious idealisms of a great world exposition. Yet it is a consistent and an understandable attitude, and before it such spectacled and bearded critics as myself, with their talk of functionalism, of expression of new materials, of a new architecture for a new world, must stand silent and rather abashed, for what we are criticizing is nothing but pure play. One might as well attempt the serious analysis of a child's headlong rush through a daisy field.

Thus, in the long walls and the pinnacles crusted with sculpture, in the pylons and the torches and the broken skyline, one has, as it were, an anatomy of play, and as such the whole must be judged. The plan forms compose well. The basic relationships between vertical and horizontal elements seem effective, and the climax of the great tower rich and adequate. San Francisco seems to be suffering from some of the difficulties in painted and sculptural decoration which are plaguing us here at the New York Fair; yet somehow in San Francisco it makes less difference. Here in New York we are trying to be real, and a thing which is real must have a definite validity of its own—its very reality establishes a



Two views of Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay, showing the present state of progress in building the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition which is to open next February. Comparison with the views of the preliminary studies and models shown in June, 1937, Pencil Points, shows how near the project is to completion and how faithfully the model visualized the result

standard. In San Francisco, on the other hand, the entire attempt seems to be to build the reverse of reality; and, if the effect is stunning, strange, imaginative, heartwarming, gay, what matter tawdry details? San Francisco, then, is producing almost the ideal architecture of escape, and behind the difference between the aims of San Francisco and the aims of the New York Fair lies a deeper problem, which is the reason for the Fair itself—that is, the real, social, popular reason, and not the mere matter of making money. People flock to Fairs, good or bad; experience tells us that. I have a sneaking feeling that there are as many of them searching for an escape from the humdrum routine of their ordinary days as there are those who in the Fair seek to learn the truths about the world. I have a sneaking feeling, too, that perhaps the one attitude is as healthy as the other, or may be, and that a Fair may as legitimately be merely a grand frolic, a sort of folk vacation, as it may be a serious international enterprise. Once granted the aim which the San Francisco Fair has apparently chosen for itself, one must grant it a large measure of success. Its visitors, in general, will be amazed, delighted; they will be able to see its contents simply, without danger of getting lost; and then, like children, they will be enabled to enjoy its wealth of imaginative and fairy-tale phantasy. When they return they will carry a single consistent picture as a pleasant memory of cheer. What the visitor to the New York Fair will carry away will of course depend upon him; its very vastness, its great variety, renders any single consistent impression almost impossible. To some it may be the great axis from Perisphere to Government Building; to others it may be the whirling and fascinating gadgets of many of the exhibits themselves; to others still, it may be a real education in the qualities of a future world which science makes possible—but, whatever the impression, it will not have the single, consistent, laughing note of San Francisco.

* * * *

The Wheaton College Competition

In the September article on Competitions, *an analysis of the fourth prize design of Alexander Dukelski was, through an oversight, omitted. It is a pleasure to be able to give it here.*

The fourth prize design of Alexander Dukelski for the Wheaton College competition shows a scheme quite different from those of the other prize winners. In its use of the site it is one of the best, concentrating the building close to the road on the higher portion of the site, and leaving the largest possible areas around the lake shores. The site chosen necessitates a number of changes of level, which are ingeniously provided for in the stair planning. There are two chief entrances—one from across the bridge, leading directly into the music school wing; the other from a path around the lake, leading to the entrance which the public from the road will share. The corridor from which the music school opens connects the two, and forms, with the mass of the main theatre, a pleasant interior court. Road and path are thereby reduced to a minimum, and at the same time there is ample allowance for parking. The public entrance to the theatre, as in some of the other designs, is from an upper floor, with a monumental stair leading up from the ground floor; it is possible that greater study might have simplified the arrangement of these stairs and the space under the auditorium. As it is, there is here a little confusion in the plan. The library is well lighted and situated most conveniently to the studios and the school wing which it serves; but its northern exposure, although efficient, is not the most cheerful library orientation, and the view from its windows across the enclosed court and through the loggia under the art gallery, out to the parking space and the road, seems somewhat constricted and uninteresting. The small theatre is placed at right angles to the main auditorium, and uses the same stage house in such a way that, as in many of the other designs, the simultaneous use of scenery for the two theatres is almost impossible. The relationship of the drama school to the library and the music and art departments is much closer than in many of the designs; in fact, the whole treatment of this part of the plan, with its simple circulation pattern, is exceptionally well studied. The masses of the exterior are generally well arranged, although the relation of the proposed new buildings to the existing group is looser and less unified than in some of the other designs. One wishes, too, that the window treatment had been simplified and clarified. The relations of solid and void are at times a little incoherent, as in the end of the school wing. Had there been in these little details the same clarity and simplicity that controls the relations of the plan, the design would undoubtedly have stood even higher than it does; for, from the point of view of practical relationship of parts, clear simple connections, and basic economy resulting from careful study, this is one of the most successful of all of the designs.

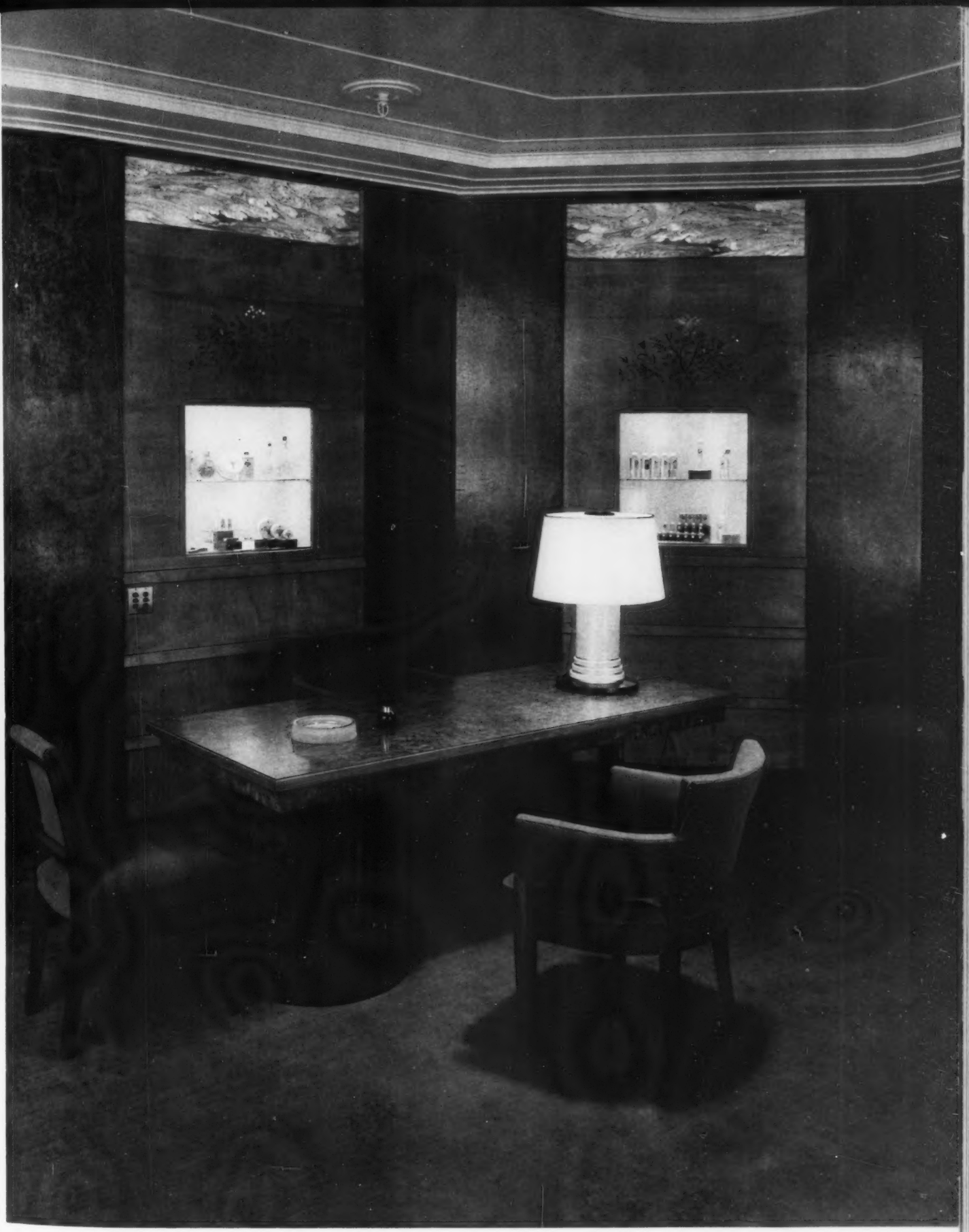
A WHOLESALE SHOWROOM

DESIGNED FOR HOUBIGANT, INC., BY VAHAN HAGOPIAN

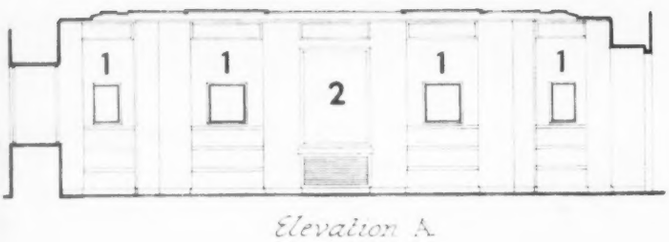
ON the second floor of the Houbigant building in West 45th Street, New York, there existed a number of well-designed and elaborately decorated rooms suitable for executive offices. The company desired a wholesale showroom, however, which would be separate from these offices yet near enough to the sales department for convenience. This showroom, as the place where visiting buyers were to be received by the sales manager, had to be expressive of the character of the company's products and appropriate as a setting for their advantageous display. Since most of the buyers are men, it was felt proper to require a masculine feeling in the design, though with a refinement that would appeal to numerous women buyers as well. A contemporary spirit was also desired.

How well architect Vahan Hagopian solved the problem is indicated by the accompanying plates. (Photographs by F. S. Lincoln). The woods used on the walls are a rich brown elm burl, walnut of a lighter shade, and a natural finish English sycamore. The rug is warm in tone to harmonize with the walls. The plaster ceiling is painted several shades lighter than the sycamore. The painted panels contain bright spots of color and appear almost translucent under the Klieg lights. Panels over showcases are Lumar.

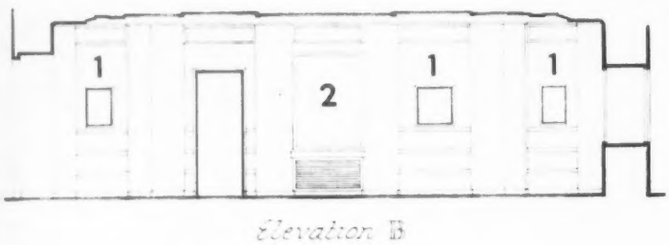
A closer view of the end of the Houbigant wholesale showroom shows clearly the illuminated show cases and suggests their effectiveness for dignified display. The circular table is designed to hold temporary displays upon which attention can be focussed by a spotlight located in the ceiling above it



The sales manager's desk, where he receives wholesale buyers, has within easy reach a series of control buttons whereby he can modify the illumination of the room and change the intensity of light at any point as the conversation may warrant



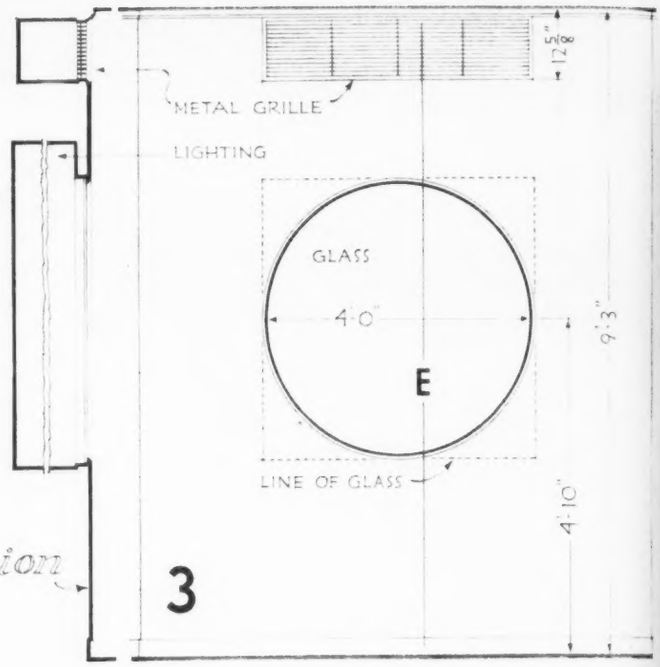
Elevation A



Elevation B

Elevations of Reception Room

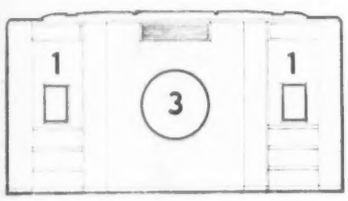
NO SCALE



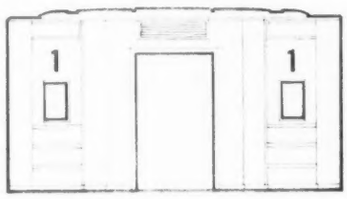
Section

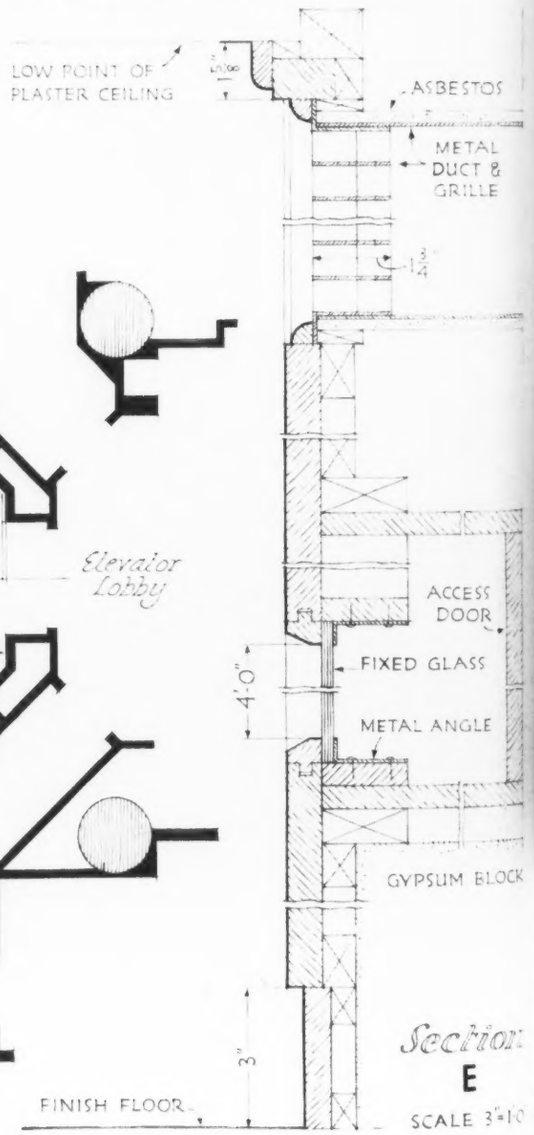
Elevation SCALE 3/8"=1'-0"

Elevation C



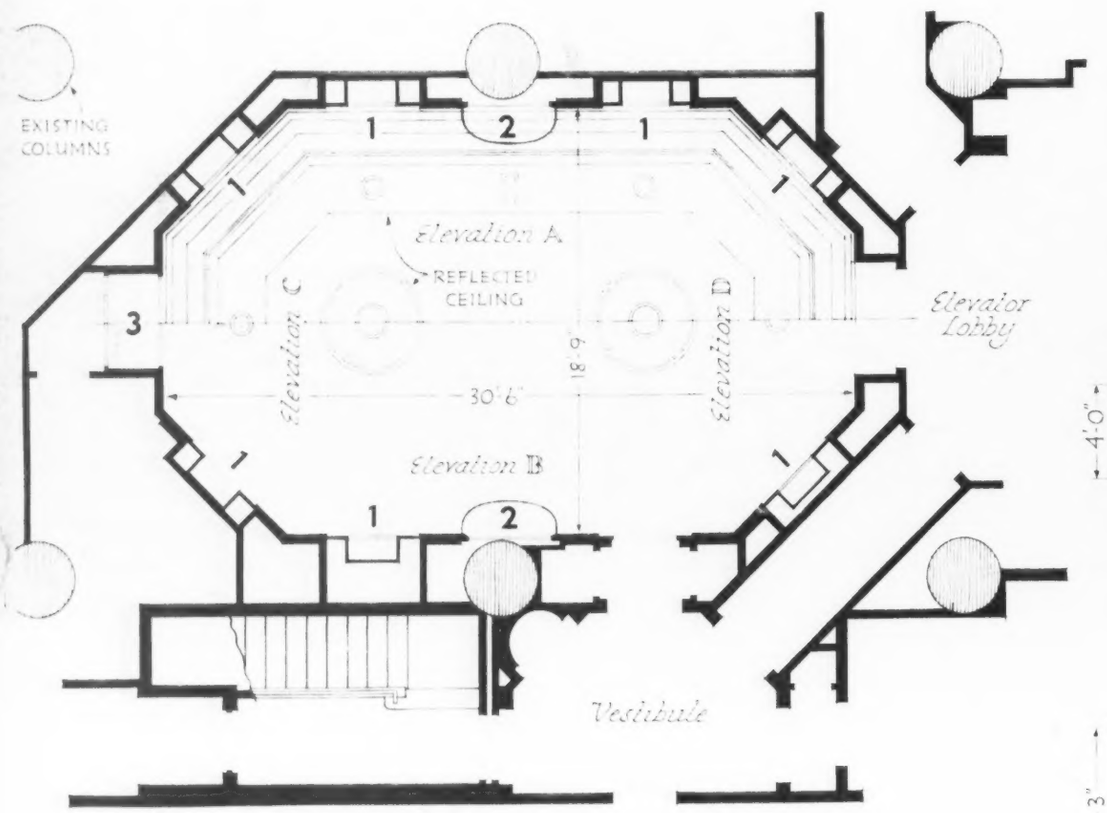
Elevation D





Section E

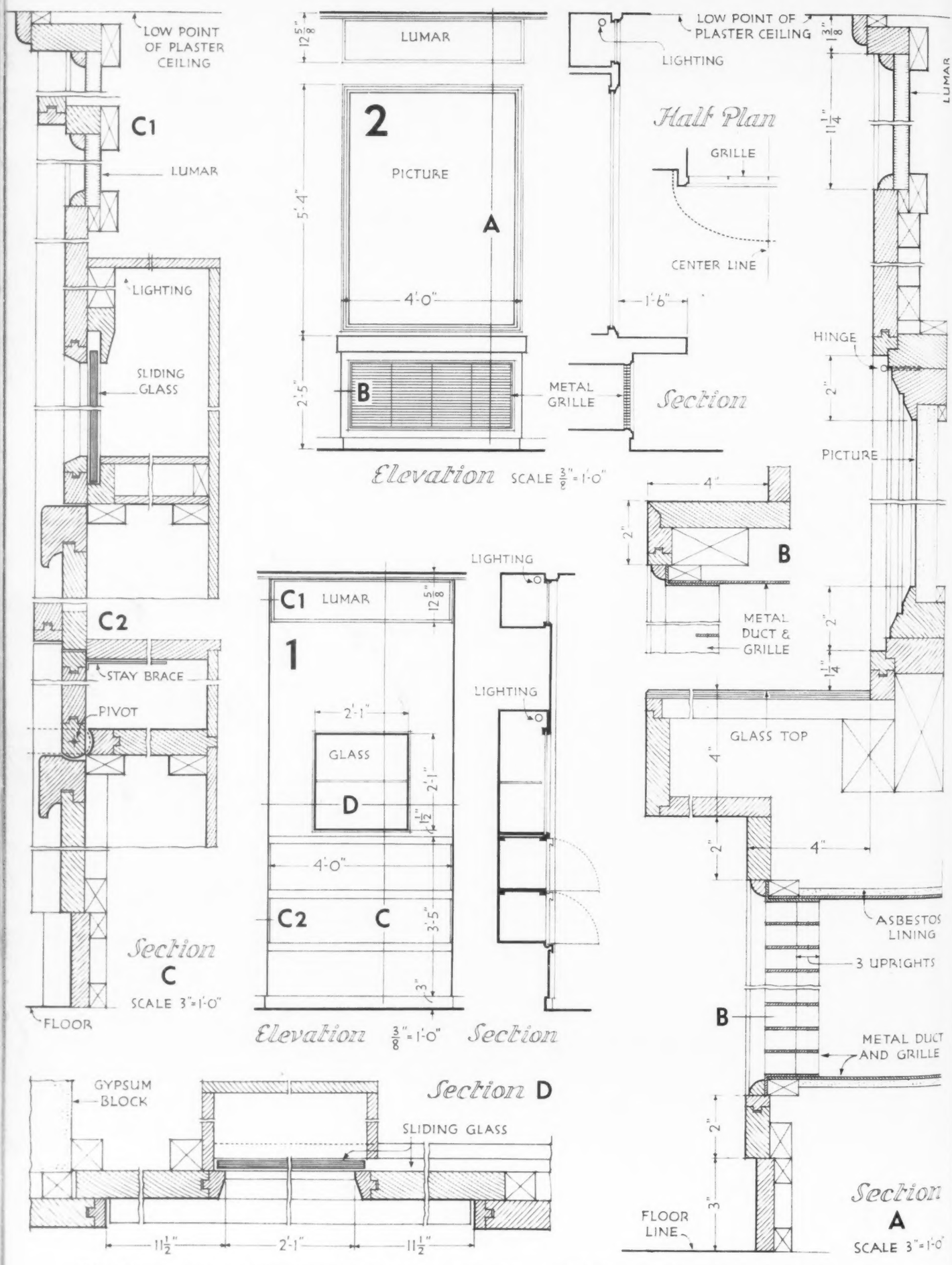
SCALE 3"=1'-0"



General Plan SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"

690 DETAILS OF SHOWROOM FOR HOUBIGANT, INC., 539 WEST 45TH STREET, NEW YORK

Two decorative panels on either side of the room were painted directly on natural finish English sycamore by Bernard Lamotte. They are illuminated by Klieg lights located in the ceiling which accounts for the apparent difference in color between them and the other sycamore panels



692 DETAILS OF SHOWROOM FOR HOUBIGANT, INC., 539 WEST 45TH STREET, NEW YORK

Much of the merchandise is normally hidden from view in compartments equipped with drop-front doors which may be readily opened by the sales manager as he leads the customer around to show special items

The stairs connecting the showroom with the third floor, where the general offices are located, are extremely simple and for that reason effective. The rail is built of terra cotta block, finished with plaster, and painted robin's egg blue. The metal handrail is nickel silver. Asphalt tile treads and risers on the stairs have white metal nosings. The walls are pale ivory

PLANTS DICTATE GARDEN FORMS

EACH HAS PLACE AS MATERIAL IN LANDSCAPE DESIGN

BY JAMES C. ROSE

It is quite common and almost a boast among some Landscape Architects that they have "never planted a seed" or "don't know one plant from another"—an "art for art's sake" attitude which puts landscape design farther and farther from contemporary life and is therefore the worst possible salesmanship. Can you fancy an architect selling a client on the basis that he knew and cared nothing about brick, wood, and concrete? Or that he was too concerned with beauty to bother about them?

Considered as materials, all plants have definite potentialities and each plant has an inherent quality which will inevitably express itself. An intelligent landscape design can evolve only from a profound knowledge of, and sensitivity to, materials. When we force materials in architecture or sculpture we are sure of at least one thing: that the form, however offensive, will be relatively constant. But with plants the struggle is endless and results in victory neither for the plant nor the man who clipped it. If the plant should win the design would be lost; and if the man should win he would succeed only in preserving something false from the beginning.

The twentieth century landscape, although hardly touched, even in theory, would of necessity result in the honest use of materials as in the best modern architecture and sculpture. Plants are not applied to a preconceived ground pattern. They dictate form as surely as do use and circulation.

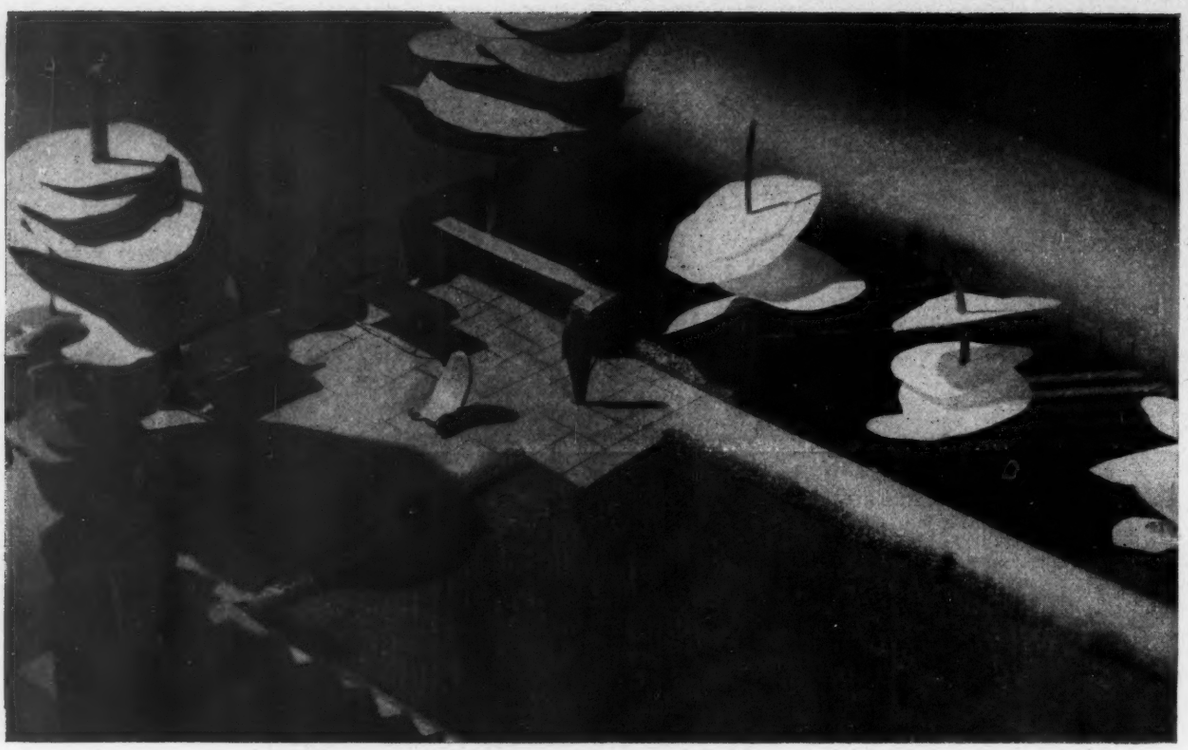
II

It is only fair to mention that some Beaux Arts landscape designers have used plants for their inherent quality, but under this system they could never be more than decorative elements made to conform to an eclectic, ornamental, imposed, geometric pattern with an eye to pictorial composition alone. No striving for the picturesque has resulted in more than a superficial camouflage or façade which obscures rather than expresses the real meaning. Character develops from the actualities which have been solved rather than obscured. Otherwise, we have only the personality of a "great individual" who softens everything with a disguise of ornament to protect hothouse souls from contact with reality.

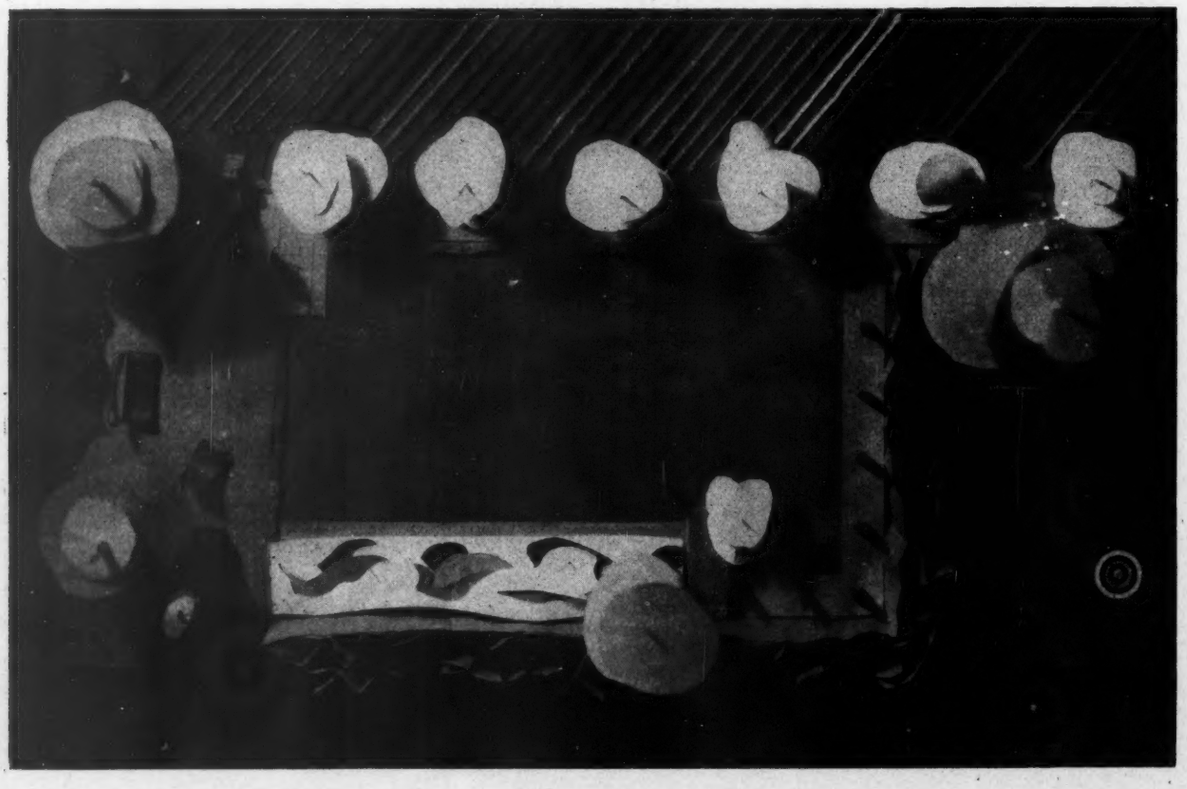
It is a vain person who believes that he is free of his own times and can create a detached "thing of beauty." The personal equation exists only as a minor part of the social equation; as society becomes inter-dependent its expression is social and the "great individual" passes from the scene. It is then that the elements of our own environment become integrated and virtuosity loses meaning. It is then that an expressive style evolves and design ceases to be an eclectic adaptation of ornament to provide a picturesque setting for idle people.

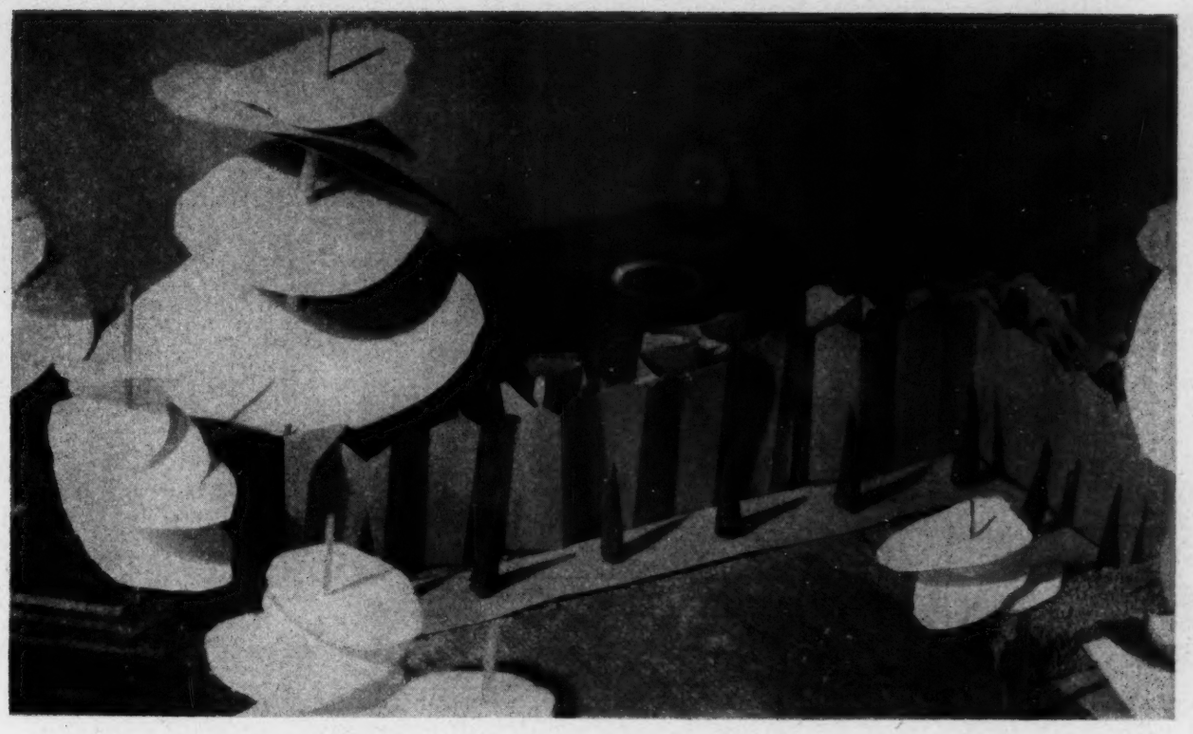
We cannot live in pictures, and therefore a landscape designed as a series of pictures robs us of an opportunity to use that area for animated living. The war cry is often heard

In architectural composition with plant materials, Rose uses a low hedge to enclose without obstructing the view and selects plants which will remain the desired height and width without clipping, to insure minimum maintenance. Each plant plays its part in the scheme



Distinctive of the author's garden design, shown here in a working model, is the simple division without sacrifice of visibility, the disposition of space for use, and interest gained from planes and line directions in opposition. If executed with indigenous materials, Rose estimates this type of garden would not cost more than 15 per cent of the cost of a house in the $3,000 to $5,000 class. He has considered the organic relation of plants to design





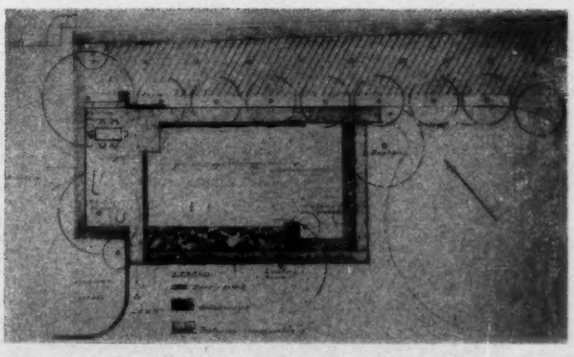
Notable in this garden model is the exchange of an axis for movement and direction, as discussed in the accompanying article. Plant materials are composed in volume

that we must combine use and beauty; but by this is meant that we should develop a ground pattern of segregated, geometric areas strung along an axis in Beaux Arts relationship and separated by "embellishments" which compose a picture for the "terminal point" of each area. Something to look at!

This may be called exterior decoration, but from the standpoint of twentieth century design, it has no justification. The intrinsic beauty and meaning of a landscape design come from the organic relationship between materials and the division of space in volume to express and satisfy the use for which it is intended. From this viewpoint, the landscape "picture" fades with the "façade" and clears the deck for animated design. Now we can throw away the rubber stamp of Beaux Arts tradition and, although a continuity of style will rightly develop, the solution of each problem will acquire individuality and distinction because it is based on the organic integration of almost inexhaustible material, existing conditions, and the factors of use which could never repeat themselves exactly in all cases.

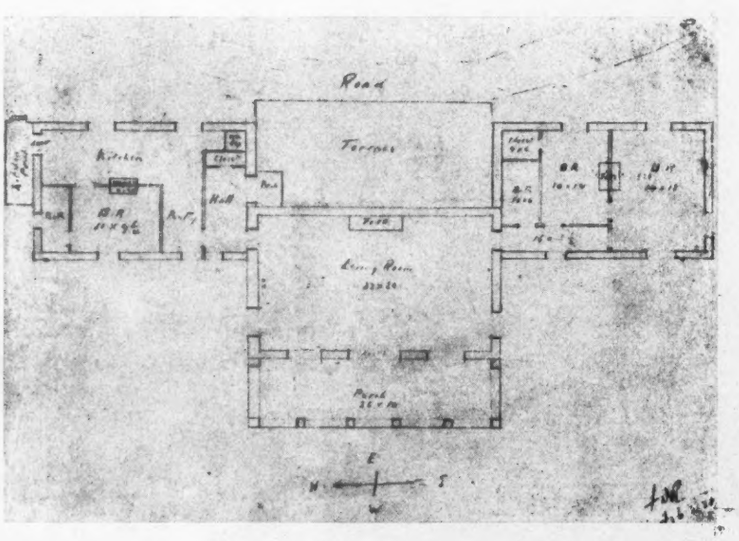
Ornamentation with plants in landscape design to create "pictures" or picturesque effect means what ornamentation has always meant: the fate call of an outworn system of aesthetics. It has always been the closing chapter of art which had nothing more to say. In one last hasty attempt to propagate, it sings the same old song with a more rasping voice and sordid emphasis. What a pity so few Landscape Architects realize the opportunity they are overlooking in not examining the possibilities of the contemporary approach. It might justify a profession which has, until now, rightly been tagged a useless luxury for the idle and not-too-intelligent rich.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *In the December issue of* PENCIL POINTS, *Rose will continue his discussions with: "The Dwelling: Integration of House and Landscape."*



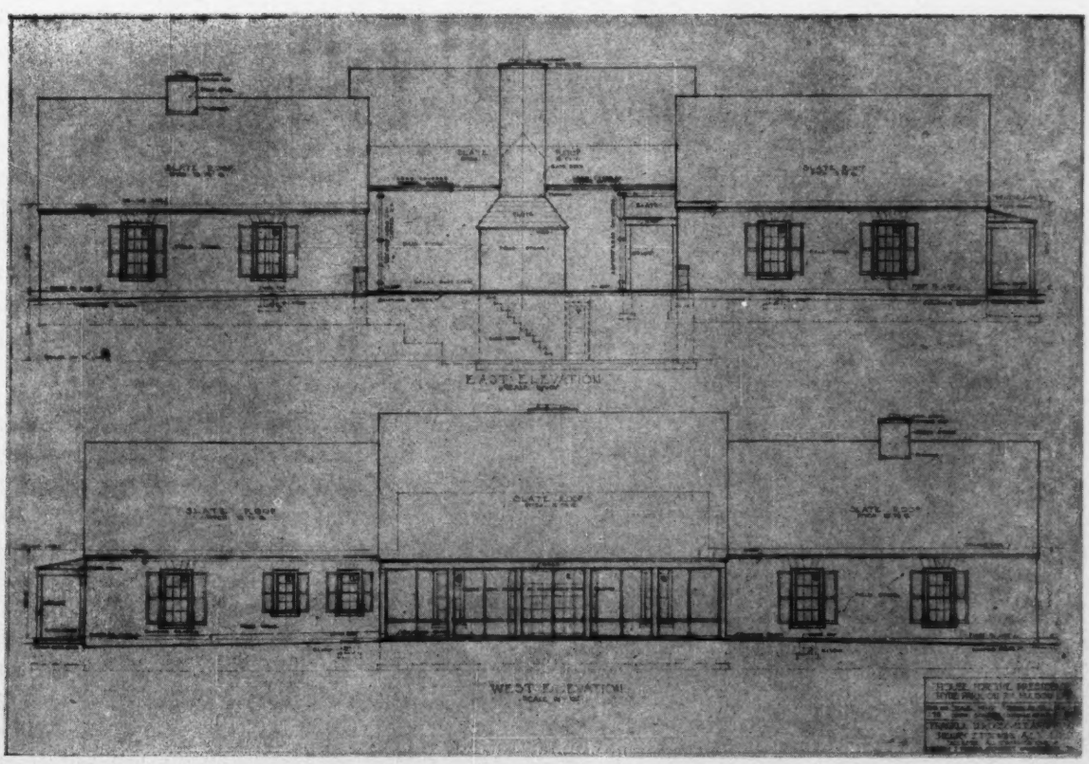
This plan of the garden was drawn for record only after decisions had been made on the site and the model constructed from the pattern evolved from use relations

This small house designed by Franklin D. Roosevelt for his own summer hide-away on his Hyde Park estate, pictured above and on the opposite page in renderings by Schell Lewis, Delineator, is nearing completion on a wooded knoll overlooking the Hudson River Valley. Henry J. Toombs, of Warm Springs, Ga., is Associate Architect

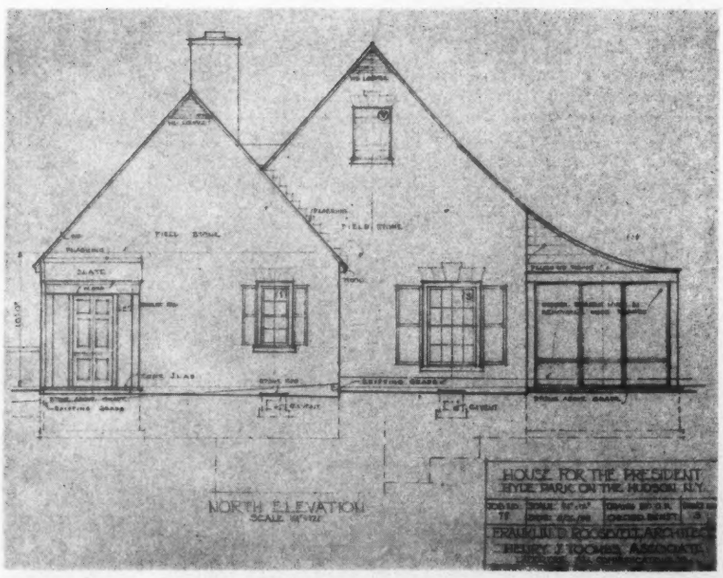


The plans of the house were drafted by Roosevelt, as the signature on this drawing shows, with accompanying sections and sketches. From these, Toombs prepared the elevation on the opposite page and the other working drawings and details that were required. In designing his own home, President Roosevelt follows a tradition established by Washington and Jefferson

Entrance to the President's private cottage will be from this side, where a driveway will border the broad, flagged terrace. The center section of the house is a living room, 20' x 35', with sliding doors opening on a screened porch commanding a fine distant view. A kitchen and servant's quarters are in one wing, two bedrooms and a bath in the other



Reeves Studios, Inc.



The model above shows the charm of the one-story stone cottage built as a summer hide-away for the President, conforming in design to the local Dutch tradition. The sheltered porch and the large living room behind it are placed to command the view of the Hudson River Valley from Dutchess Hill, a part of the Roosevelt family estate. The President has watched the construction closely

RELIGION OF ART ENJOYS A REVIVAL

BY ROBERT L. ANDERSON

It has been indicated that the 19th century Religion of Art was succeeded by the 20th century Religion of the Social Ideal. Likewise, it has been indicated how, during the Pre-War Period, men were engaged in the process of transferring allegiance from æsthetic to social concepts. Consequently (since this series is designed to trace the transition between the two conflicting points of view) it might be presumed that this essay in the history of ideas could be concluded.

Yet, as Harold Laski pointed out in the opening pages of *The Rise of Liberalism*, "the pedigree of ideas is never straightforward." So in this matter of the conflict between æsthetic and social ideals. If the Pre-War period is marked by a shift in allegiance on the part of artists from æsthetics to political economy, the Post-War period was marked by a tremendous revival of the Religion of Art.

Frederick Lewis Allen noted the shift from the social ideal, when he wrote in *Only Yesterday*, "the bright young college graduate who in 1915 would have risked disinheritance to march in a Socialist parade yawned at Socialism in 1925 . . . " Lewis Mumford likewise noted the shift, when in *Footnote to a Decade* he wrote of, "that sudden deflation of social hopes which came . . . in the closing months of 1919. How quickly the stenographers and secretaries forgot the rigorous beauties of the Revolution, and devoted themselves to Pure Aesthetics . . . Reconstruction did a perfect fadeout." The revival of the Religion of Art was at hand.

* * *

For such sudden *volte face* toward æsthetics there were two major compulsions. In the first place, that particular type of reconstruction (Socialism and Communism) toward which the artists had been gravitating suddenly became too dangerous, at least for citizens of the United States. We came out of the War with a full-fledged labor problem on our hands. In addition, we had acquired fear and hatred of the Russian Revolution, of Communism, and of Socialism. The combination of hundreds of strikes, plus a series of bomb explosions, threw the country in a panic. For a year or more thereafter, as Mr. Allen has pointed out, we had our "ears cocked for the detonations of bombs and the tramp of Bolshevist armies." The big Red Scare of 1919-1920 was on. Mr. Mumford can afford to be satirical concerning the ease with which "stenographers and secretaries forgot" the Revolution for Pure Aesthetics. His comments date from 1931. In 1920, talk of the Revolution meant a free, one-way trip to Russia via the S.S. *Buford*.

Even without the tremendous reaction against labor activity and political radicalism which occurred immediately after the War, it was more or less inevitable that the Twenties should see a revival of interest in æsthetics.

During the first three hundred years, the history of this country had been largely the history of the conquest of a continental wilderness. The three hundred years were strenuous; as any years devoted to conquest of a wilderness must be strenuous. They left small leisure for the cultivation of art and literature. Neither the times nor the environment were propitious for the creation of great art. The few great artists this country produced either expatriated themselves or worked in isolation, ignored by their fellow-men.

With the closing years of the 19th century, however, the conquest of the continent had been completed; the frontier closed. With the Spanish-American War, the country embarked on a half-hearted imperial conquest, to be sure, but the great days of conquest were over. With the closing of the frontier, the country turned back upon itself. No longer were we the gangling adolescent, growing prodigiously in physical stature from day to day. On the contrary, we had emerged from our adolescence: books appeared which heralded the fact that *America Comes of Age*.

Like the young man who, having ceased to grow outrageously, begins to wonder what he is to accomplish with all that growth, so the country began to seek to estimate its stature.

Half a century before, Horace Greeley had advised: "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country." But the frontier was now closed; physically the country had grown up; Greeley's advice no longer was applicable. It became imperative that the young men follow the ancient injunction, "*Know thyself.*" So we began to paw over our past.

One of the first things to be discovered was the rather obvious fact that the American tradition in art and literature was thin and anæmic; that its anæmia was further vitiated by servile imitation of European traditions; that, in general, American culture had congealed into a narrow, mercenary mould formulated by the Puritans, the land-speculators, the politicians, the predatory rich, the Anthony Comstocks, and the stupid conventions of the American middle class.

It was inevitable that some such thesis should result. In the first place, it was very largely true. In the second place, adolescent intellectuals could hardly be expected to grope their way toward maturity without first cutting loose from parental tutelage. One does not burst conventions without first finding those conventions poor, meagre, and totally inadequate.

The ferment had been at work from the beginning of the century. With the pre-war years it began to break out in the work of novelists and poets. The *Imagists* came to town, shepherded by Miss Amy Lowell; the *Free Verse Revolt* began. The intellectual leadership, if I am not mistaken, was provided by Van Wyck Brooks with his book, *America's Coming of Age* (1915). The call for a critical re-estimation of our past came in a *Dial* article (1918), *On Creating a Usable Past*. The artist and the American environment were to be critically restudied. Mr. Brooks led off in 1919 with *The Ordeal of Mark Twain,* following it in 1925 with *The Pilgrimage of Henry James.* It unleashed a flood of books concerning the artist and the American environment in which the artist was praised and the American environment panned. It also was to produce, at a later date, violent reaction on the part of men like Bernard De Voto and Max Eastman, who charged that Mr. Brooks knew but little concerning the actual American environment.

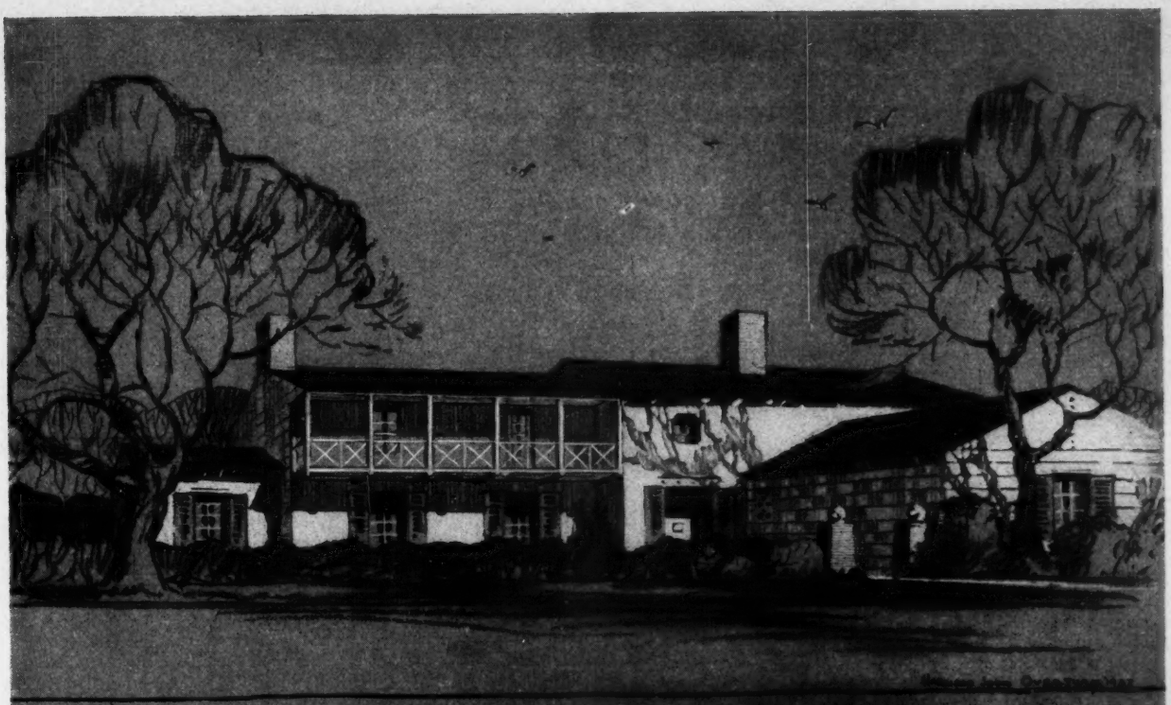
These are matters which one cannot hope to settle within the limits of this discussion. It must suffice merely to note that by 1922, when a group of thirty intellectuals brought out *Civilization in the United States,* they agreed that "the most amusing and pathetic fact of the social life of America today is its emotional and æsthetic starvation."

It is doubtful, however, whether this somewhat precious indictment of American civilization would have had much effect had it not been envigorated by more virile criticism. The Lewis Mumfords and the Harold Stearnses might sit around in "hospitable" basements dreaming of *salons* in the European tradition, or of polemic encyclopedias "in the fashion of Diderot." They might wistfully ponder "whether sensitive and cultivated minds (could) survive outside the university . . . Here we were!" But without some more virile force behind them it is perhaps questionable whether the country would have realized that there were such sensitive and cultivated minds debating their chances for survival, or that their survival was important.

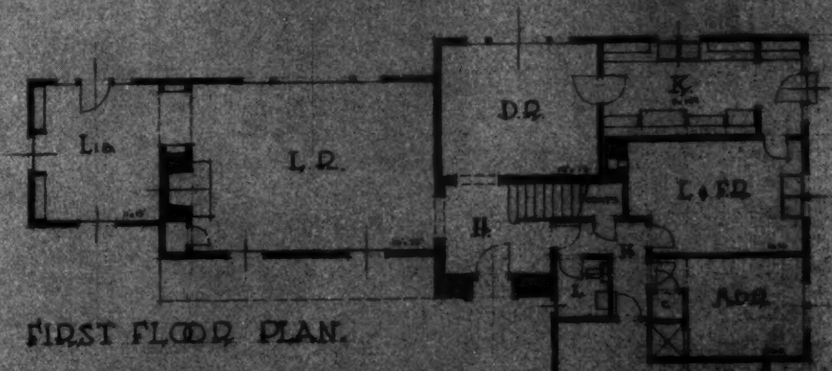
In October 1920, however, Sinclair Lewis had brought out *Main Street,* followed, some two years later, by *Babbitt.* As Mr. Allen has pointed out, "the effect of these two books was overwhelming." There began that period in which America was unmercifully castigated for its cultural poverty, for its "Babbittry." Mr. Henry Mencken shortly afterward discovered the "booboisie," and the erstwhile politically-minded young men and women took up Prouse, Joyce, Gertrude Stein, Dadaism, and all the esoteric and exotic forms of art. The more sensitive fled to Paris. The stay-at-homes proceeded gleefully with their thesis that America was phenomenally cruel to artists. Had not Mable Dodge, returning to America a decade earlier, sobbed to her son: "America is ugly, ugly, ugly"?

Even the Babbitts became convinced of their Babbittry. Sinclair Lewis might express doubts in *Main Street* as to the value of "reading Pater when Dad cleared fields." But the country bought up *Main Street* and had no doubts. If they did not go back to reading Pater, it was because they had no need to do so. The country realized how important it was to "burn with a pure, gem-like flame" for art.

In the colleges and universities departments of art were being created. By the middle of the decade there was such a dearth of adequately trained teachers that the Carnegie Corporation subsidized the training of young men and women to fill the vacancy. (I was one of them.) R. L. Duffus wrote a book: *The American Renaissance.* The revival of the Religion of Art was in full chorus.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN.

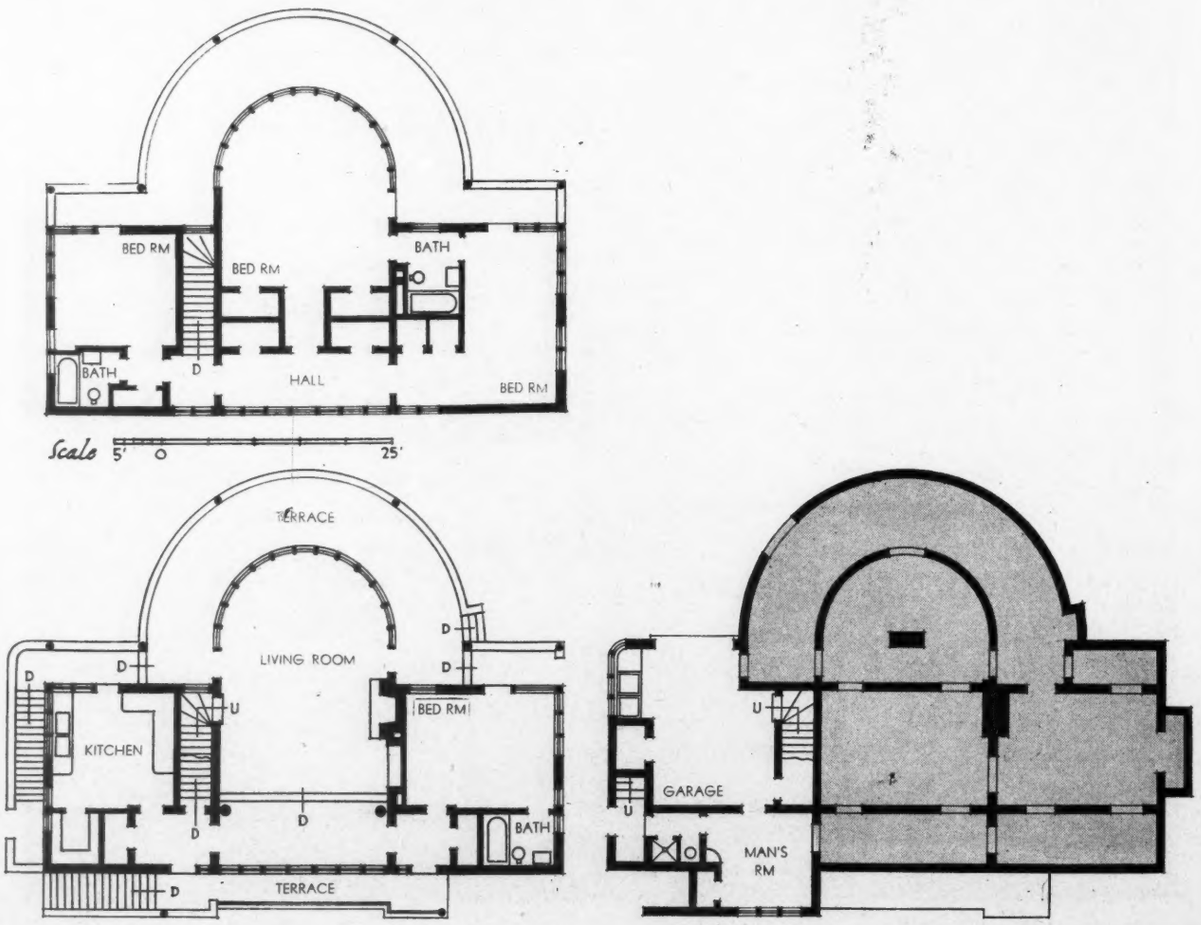


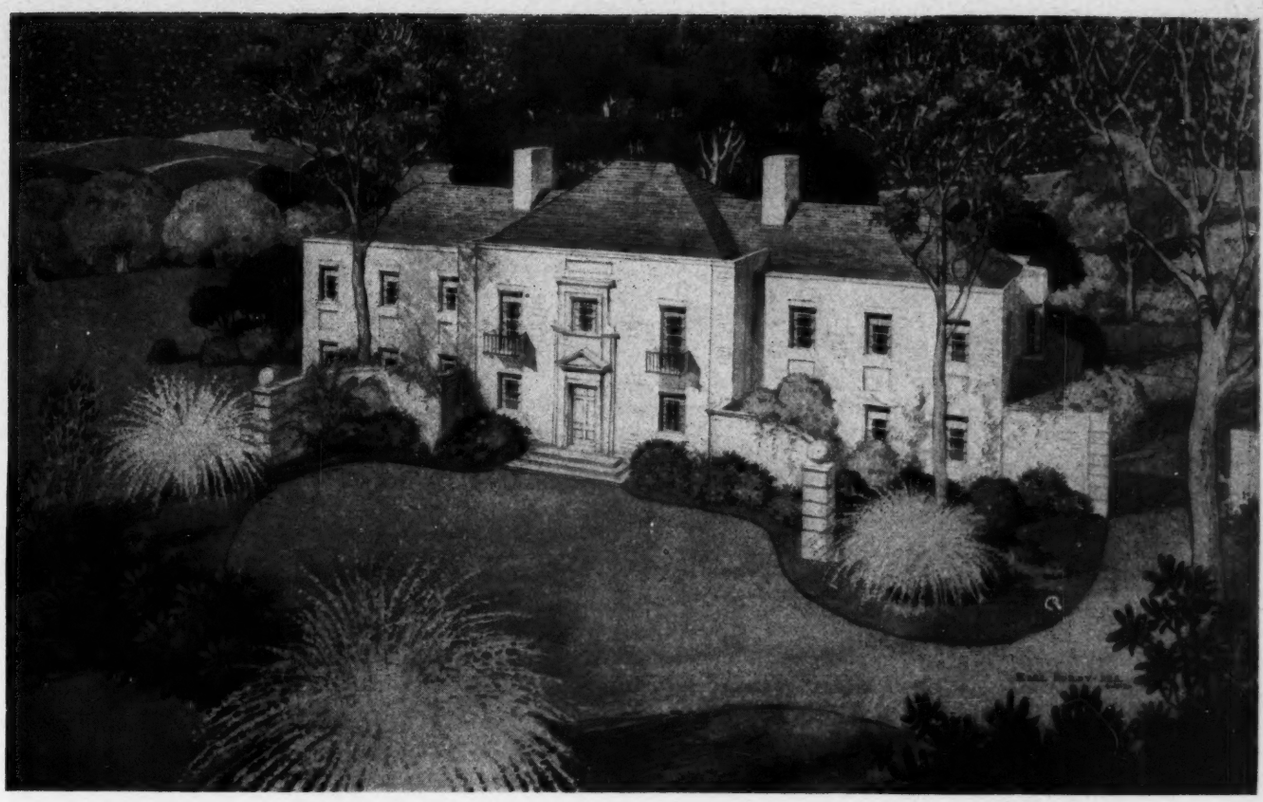
FIRST FLOOR PLAN.

RESIDENCE FOR MRS G.W.GWIN.
ENDCLYNE.
GEORGE WELLINGTON STODDARD
ARCHITECT
HARRISON JOHN OVERTURF
DEWITT C. GRIFFIN
ASSOCIATES

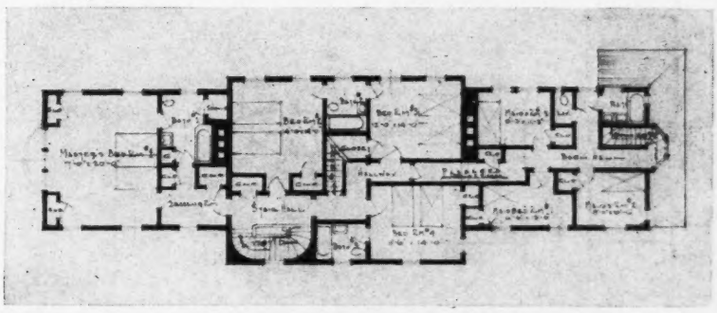
RESIDENCE BY
G. W. STODDARD

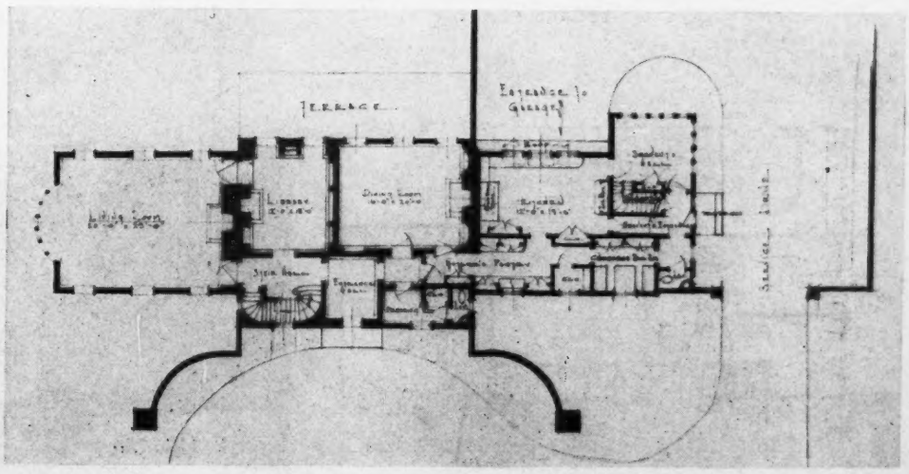
This modern beach house, designed by George S. Steele, Architect, of New York, for a tropical setting at Nassau, Bahama Islands, is of poured concrete with no wood used in the structure. The rendering is by Earl Purdy



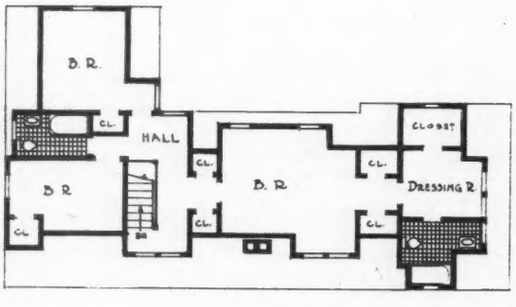


George S. Steele, Architect, designed this country house for a New Jersey setting, effectively suggested in the rendering by Earl Purdy. A large game room under the living room, a two-car garage, and service rooms are features of the basement

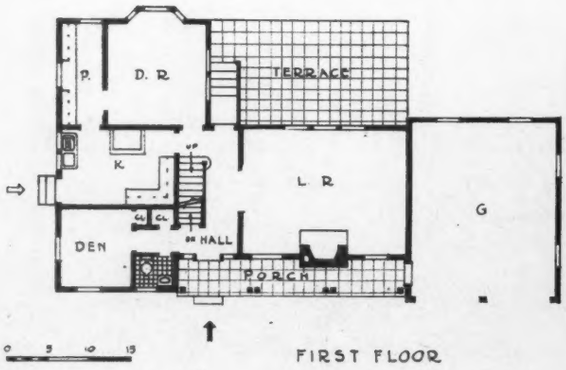




The house designed by Scholfield & Deimel, Architects, of New London, Conn., for Dr. and Mrs. Richard M. Starr, Best View, Waterford, Conn., is shown above as rendered and below as photographed on completion



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

PENCIL POINTS DATA SHEETS

Prepared by DON GRAF, B.S., M.Arch.

DISREGARD OF THE OBVIOUS

The creation of a point of interest in a plan, a facade or a sketch is a trick which the architect constantly seeks to master. But even the most adept can learn something from the punch board which we have illustrated at the left. Take a quick glance at the picture. Now cover it with your hand and answer this question—"What will the winner receive as a prize on this punch board?"

Wrong! Now read it again carefully and you will discover that the winner does *not* get a *Packard* Shaver, but gets a *guaranteed* Shaver!

Architecture is probably more of a gamble than most professions. The architect gambles on getting his commission after all the other building bills are paid, he gambles on competitions, on free sketches, and on the ability of the low bidder to carry out the project. Lest some one in your office tempts this ingrained architectural gambling weakness with a punch board like the one we have shown, we thought you would be interested in knowing beforehand just how it works.

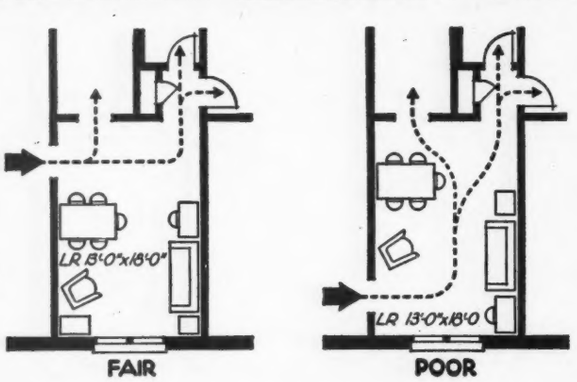
We received this punch board in the mail with a very warm and friendly letter from one M. Holloway. The letterhead proclaimed it to be from the Garden City Company of 6227 Broadway, Chicago.

LIVING ROOMS IN MULTIPLE HOUSING

Index No. **D20e** PLANNING

PENCIL POINTS DATA SHEETS PREPARED BY DON GRAF

SET 14 NOV 1938



USE OF DATA. The comments on this *Data Sheet* apply specifically to multi - family housing. Nevertheless, many of the suggestions are equally applicable to detached dwellings. The material has been taken in part from the FHA booklet entitled "Architectural Presentation and Desirable Physical Characteristics of Projects Submitted to the Rental Housing Division under Sections 207 and 210 of the National Housing Act."

SIZE. Will vary with the size of the family, their economic status and the contemplated use of the room. It should be not less than 11'-0" in width. If standard length lumber is used with 4" end bearing for joists, the width will usually work out 11'4", 13'-4", 15'-4", etc., to avoid waste in cutting. The average living room size for detached bungalows has been found to be 12'-5" x 17'-4", equal to 216 square feet. In multiple housing, the rooms are usually smaller than in detached dwellings.

ASPECT. It is generally desirable for the living room to receive sun during the periods of the day when it is occupied. For this reason south or west exposures are good. The living room should be given a favorable location with respect to attractive views. Cross-ventilation should be provided, if possible. See *Data Sheets* D5a, D5b and D5c.

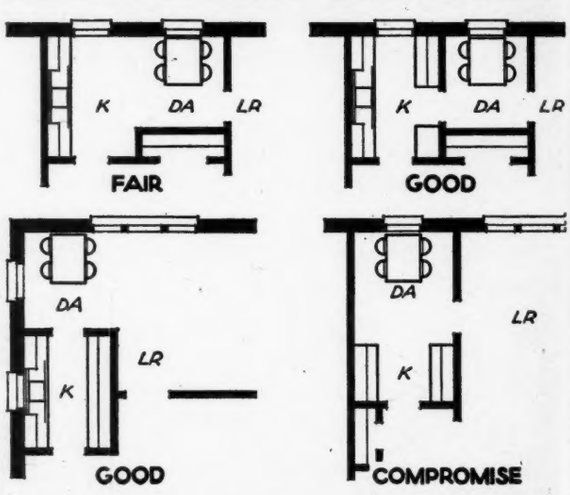
CIRCULATION. Living rooms should be entered thru a small foyer in which outer garments can be removed. The foyer acts as a buffer against direct intrusion into the living space. In no case should the necessity of passing diagonally thru the living room to reach other rooms of the dwelling be tolerated.

KITCHENS IN MULTIPLE HOUSING

Index No. **D20g** PLANNING

PENCIL POINTS DATA SHEETS PREPARED BY DON GRAF

SET 14 NOV 1938



USE OF DATA. The comments on this *Data Sheet* apply specifically to multi-family housing. Nevertheless, many of the suggestions are equally applicable to detached dwellings. The material has been taken in part from the FHA booklet entitled "Architectural Presentation and Desirable Physical Characteristics of Projects Submitted to the Rental Housing Division under Sections 207 and 210 of the National Housing Act." Where FHA recommendations have seemed incompatible with good architectural planning, changes have been deliberately made.

KITCHENS IN LOW-INCOME HOUSING. In housing for the lower-income groups, kitchen equipment must be adequate but not over-liberal. Limited cupboard and storage space would be allowable. If the cost of gas or electricity is prohibitive, mechanical refrigeration would be useless.

SIZE AND SHAPE OF ROOM. In general, the oblong room, wide enuf to accommodate fixtures on both long sides, is more efficient than a square room. The minimum is 6'-6" for kitchens with fixtures on both walls; 5'-6" for fixtures on one side only. The minimum should be amplified if possible. In detached bungalows, the average kitchen was found to be 8'-3" x 11'-3", equal to 92½ sq. ft. See *Data Sheet* D20a. In the large urban centers there are a great many childless families in which both husband and wife have gainful occupations and usually "eat out." For such people, the small kitchen may be entirely appropriate.

STRIP KITCHENETTE. The kitchen installed in a niche or closet off the living room is to be condemned without exception. It is inadequate in equipment. It fills the room with cooking odors. If the living room is used for sleeping, the strip kitchenette can and has caused asphyxiation by the escape of cooking gas or refrigerants. Wall space is sacrificed.

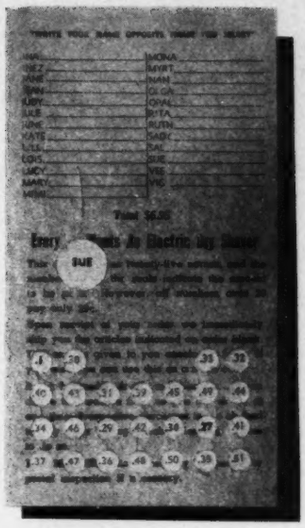
LIGHT AND VENTILATION. The kitchen should face east or northeast, if possible. An east aspect is particularly desirable if a dining alcove is incorporated. Ample light and good ventilation to remove hot air and odors are important. An exhaust fan is highly desirable.

DINING SPACE. Dining alcove should be located so it does not interfere with food preparation. See *Data Sheet* H1g.

An inquiry reveals that this name is what is technically known as a "trade style" used by the K & S Sales Company. Other "trade styles" of the same company are Universal Industries and Garden City Novelty Company. We couldn't help but feel slightly unflattered in being addressed by M. Holloway, who is evidently of less importance than Mr. Koolish, the president, or Mr. Lichtenstein, the vice-president.

It was with difficulty that we overcame our impulse to take $6.95 of our h.e.m. and send it to the K & S—excuse us, the Garden City Company. In return we were to receive an electric dry shaver for the punch board winner, an electric dry shaver for ourselves, a PACKARD combination pen and pencil for Number 29, and an additional surprise gift for replying within 15 days.

However, the fact that if you got Numbers 1 to 29, you paid what you drew, and numbers over 29 paid only 29c got the best of our curiosity so we turned the card over and exposed the numbers. Could it have been an accident that only Jean (1c) and Mimi (27c), out of all the girls, were priced at less than the maximum? We'd almost been fooled twice—once by the Packard business and once by the 1 to 29 business. We were so annoyed we weren't sure whether the 3-letter word indicating the winner was a dare or a girl's name.



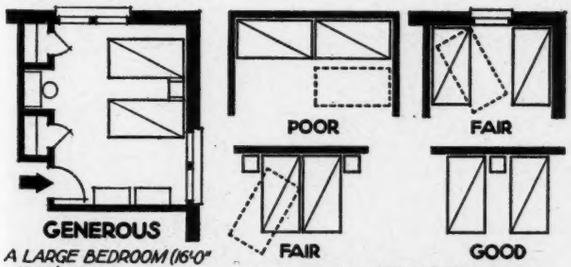
BED ROOMS IN MULTIPLE HOUSING

Index No. **D20h** PLANNING

PENCIL POINTS DATA SHEETS PREPARED BY DON GRAF

SET 14 NOV 1938

TWO SMALL BEDROOMS (13'-0"x10'-0")-illustrating the need of careful study of wall spaces.



A LARGE BEDROOM (16'-0" x12'-0")-affording space for study, sewing, or play.

Arrangements of TWIN BEDS rated for facility of housekeeping.

USE OF DATA. The comments on this *Data Sheet* apply specifically to multi-family housing. Nevertheless, many of the suggestions are equally applicable to detached dwellings. The material has been taken in part from the FHA booklet entitled "Architectural Presentation and Desirable Physical Characteristics of Projects Submitted to the Rental Housing Division under Sections 207 and 210 of the National Housing Act."

BEDROOMS IN LOW-INCOME HOUSING. It is desirable to have at least 1 bedroom that will accommodate twin beds. Where space-saving is essential to very low rentals, observance of this recommendation may not be imperative. Persons who must economize in the rent they pay, have the parallel problem of reduced household expense. A double bed costs less than a pair of twin beds and the recurrent cost of laundry is less.

SIZE AND SHAPE OF ROOM. Careful study of wall spaces for required furniture will largely determine the room size. It has been found that detached bungalows have an average bedroom size of 10'-5" to 10'-8" wide by 11'-8" to 12'-7" long.

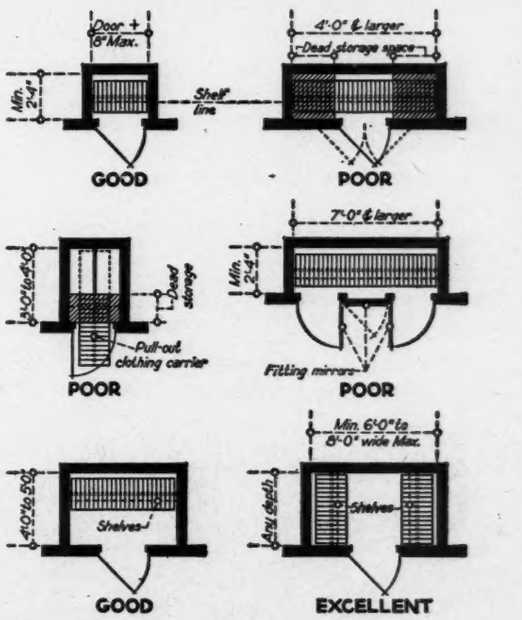
PLANNING REQUIREMENTS. Privacy, ventilation, adequate storage space, quiet, and some sunlight during each day are desirable. Bedrooms must frequently serve as places for study, sewing or play, especially in small dwelling units, hence there should be adequate space for these activities. Facility of cleaning and bed-making is of special importance. Added time and labor are required to move beds or to make them up from 1 side only.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CLOSETS

Index No. **D20f** PLANNING

PENCIL POINTS DATA SHEETS PREPARED BY DON GRAF

SET 14 NOV 1938



FUNCTION OF CLOSET. Bedroom closets should be classed as "live storage." More erroneous and misleading information has been printed on closets than on any other space in the house. The following requirements are basic in the arrangement of desirable closet space:

1. Hanging space that does not permit the easy removal and examination of garments is useless.
2. Excess wall space devoted to doors, so that garments are visible and accessible, is undesirable.
3. Mothproof bags for the protection of infrequently used garments are 2'-1½" wide, making the usual closet recommendation of 22" entirely inadequate. No closet should be less than 2'-4" in the clear, if garments are not to rub and brush against the closet walls. A man's overcoat will measure 24" as a minimum in width.
4. 1¼" gas pipe is infinitely preferable to wooden poles, for easy manipulation of the hangers.
5. 5 linear feet of hanging space is a minimum for each person. Systems based on floor area or cubage for closets are not true indexes of the available hanging space and should not be employed in determining closet sizes.
6. The hanging pole for adults' use should be 5'-8" above the floor to accommodate long coats and long evening dresses—hanging poles are invariably located too low.

THE THRESHING FLOOR

A SECTION DEVOTED TO BRUTAL FRANKNESS

The requirements of the New York City Housing Authority, to be met in development of group residence projects, are questioned by JAMES ROSS, *Architect, of 274 Madison Avenue, New York, in two letters answering Talbot F. Hamlin's recent article on this current topic. The subjects discussed—size of the rooms and the percentage of land occupancy—seemed to merit the separate treatment which was accorded them in Ross' letters.*

FURTHER consideration should be given to the problem of low cost housing in New York City than that contained in the interesting article, by Mr. Hamlin, on the Harlem and Williamsburg developments, in PENCIL POINTS for May.

These developments might be said to be a magnificent experiment, and most people would agree with Mr. Hamlin that they provide excellent living accommodations. They might be called a beautiful solution of the problem of slum clearance, but they are a solution of a problem entirely erroneous in conception. Slum clearance can never be carried out on such scale in New York City, and the attempt should not be made to continue it, except on modified lines. Only by this can a sufficiently large number of families be benefited by improved living conditions.

A pamphlet issued by the New York City Housing Authority states that the Williamsburg housing provides 5,688 rooms, on a land coverage of about 30 percent, and at a cost of $13,500,000. This amounts to nearly $2,400.00 per room.

This excessive cost is partly due to the limited area of the land covered by the buildings, and to the size of the rooms. There is no valid reason why rooms in subsidized housing should be as large as provided in these buildings: the Harlem plan having some bedrooms of 121, 131, 144 and 148 square feet, while bedrooms in old law tenements are 70 square feet, many of them 60 square feet or less.

The only reasonable solution for slum clearance in New York City would be to follow the Multiple Dwelling Law, which provides for a living room in each apartment of 132 square feet; the other rooms to be at least 80 square feet. Even to follow regulations of the Federal Housing Authority, as to the size of bedrooms, would mean a very great reduction in cost. These provide for one bedroom in each apartment of 100 or 110 square feet; a secondary bedroom being allowed at 70 square feet.

Compare these sizes with those required by the United States Housing Authority, for subsidized housing, where one bedroom in each apartment must be 120 square feet; the others at least 80 square feet. It seems absurd that subsidized housing should provide larger rooms than those allowed by the Federal Housing Authority, in plans for guaranteed loans.

Small rooms are not the cause of the degradation of the slums, as is quite evident by the thousands of families who occupy some of the old law tenements, and who are able to lead normal decent lives, irrespective of the limited conditions.

The Multiple Dwelling Law was intended to guard against these conditions in new buildings. To follow its minimum requirements would immeasurably improve living conditions and that is all that should be attempted for subsidized housing, to provide for the extensive slum clearance that is necessary in New York City, or that can have any appreciable effect on the existing conditions.

This is not an argument for small rooms. It is a plea for the possible 15 or 20 percent additional occupants, who *because of these restrictions* are compelled to continue existence in their present objectionable surroundings. It should be remembered that old law tenements are usually built on a 25-foot lot; four or five stories high; with four apartments on each floor consisting of three rooms each; with living room lighted from the street or the yard, the kitchen lighted from the living room, and an inside bedroom lighted from the kitchen.

Eliminate the slums; get rid of dark rooms and inadequate toilet facilities; provide adequate light and air by large courts; and provide play space for the children. But do it in such a way as to give decent living accommodations to the *greatest number of families possible* with the amount of money available.

The Housing Authority should not allow the pride of accomplishment, in these completed buildings, to dull the faculties to such an extent that it becomes impossible to realize that only through more moderate plans can the greater good be attained.

* * *

MR. HAMLIN also states: "In every really important matter of land usage —in air, in light, in the sense of green and growing things as a concomitant of living . . . in every single one of these matters, they are better than the most expensive apartments of Park Avenue."

Mr. Hamlin seems not to sense the absurdity of providing such a condition of luxury, for subsidized housing, when the object should be to provide light and air for as many as possible of the millions of occupants of old law tenements.

In the pamphlet, "History of Williamsburg Houses" it is stated on the selection of architects for the buildings, "The test required that the architects begin with . . . factors such as rent, building and land costs, and proceed from there to realize the project which would function successfully within these limitations." It might be asked, of what value is such knowledge, when the U. S. H. A. limits the occupancy of the land to 30 percent of its area?

To pursue such a policy of wastefulness, where the greatest economy should prevail, will ultimately react to the entire destruction of the most important work being done by the Government, which is to improve living conditions of the under-privileged.

An enlightening comparison on this subject of land occupancy can be made between the Dunbar Houses and

Harlem River Houses, in the pamphlet "Harlem River Houses." (The land value of both being about the same.)

The Dunbar Houses are on Seventh Avenue, one block south of the Harlem River Houses, the rental being from $9 to $14 a room, a month. These buildings occupy about 50 percent of the land and are of ordinary construction, six stories high and walk-up. The management, by the way, takes the greatest pride in the garden courts, justly claiming they are as fine as any on Park Avenue.

The article referred to, about the Dunbar Houses, is as follows: "With excellent ventilation because they are only two rooms deep, the buildings are grouped about garden courts which occupy one-half the block area." A privately-sponsored development, it is so far ahead of new law tenements as to be in a different class. Unfortunately the *costs are too great* for average low-income families.

Reference is also made to new law tenements on an adjacent block and they are compared to old law tenements to this effect: "Every room has a window and every apartment running water and a toilet . . . But they are generally *too expensive* for low-income families."

These buildings are five stories high, of ordinary construction and occupy, probably, 70 percent of the lot area.

Now, to provide living accommodations for low income families, four adjacent blocks are taken, having an area of seven acres. Streets are closed, giving a total area of nine acres, and the article states that 25 percent of the land is occupied by the buildings.

To provide for low income families the buildings are made four stories in height, they are made fire-proof, rooms are made larger than in new law tenements, and they are provided with complete bathrooms, instead of toilets, as in the new law tenements.

This Harlem property is assessed at $4,250,000, the land included, which is given as $1,650,000. This figures out to be $2,884 per apartment, or $850 per room for cost of land alone.

If the property should be occupied to the same extent as the excellent Dunbar apartments, the land cost would be reduced to one-half, or $425 a room, for a four-story building, and proportionately less for a higher building, or double the number of rooms could be placed on the land with a four-story building.

Further comment is unnecessary, except to call attention to the published statement that the Red Hook development is to be six stories, fireproof, with elevator service, and to occupy 23 percent of the land area.

Critical comments, frequent among the architects after even "run of the mill" competitions, seem to multiply when Federal awards are announced, as in the September issue of PENCIL POINTS *presenting ranking designs for the Covington, Kentucky, Court House and Post Office Competition, won by Thomas Harlan Ellett, Architect, of New York. This letter is from* ELECTUS D. LITCHFIELD, *Architect, of 32 E. 57th Street, New York.*

THE winning design in the recent competition for the Covington Post Office has the virtues of simplicity and impressive scale. If the great glazed openings between the three-story piers are handled with great care, a pleasing and monumental building should result.

To obtain the simplicity and scale of the drawing, however, it will be necessary to have the openings count as continuous from the ground story to the roof. Certainly from the standpoint of functional design, this is not desirable. Everybody knows that two additional floors cross the openings. Whether it will be possible to disguise that fact remains to be seen.

Is it quite fair in a competition such as this to ignore the existence of a second or third story, as has been done in Mr. Ellet's winning design, or of even but one of these two stories as in Holabird and Root's honorable mention?

Certainly Mr. Snyder's elevation would have been more impressive if he had been less honest and ignored the spandrels.

To do so would not have helped Messrs. Bogner & Stubbins; and one is tempted to ask the judges in what way a great overhanging portico, even when supported by the slenderest of rectangular posts, is any more practical than the now-tabooed Classical colonnade.

Architects "are" building on separate contracts, reports FREDERICK WALLICK, *Architect, of 308 Hume-Mansur Bldg., Indianapolis, in answer to H. V. Walsh's article on the method and low-cost houses, in our June issue.*

TO AN architect who for twenty years has followed the separate contract method, Mr. Walsh's treatise on low cost homes built without a general contractor comes as a surprise. The procedure was inaugurated by several New York architects in the "gay twenties" and has since been adopted in many offices where residential work predominates. The practice developed in those lush days not as a factor of self-preservation or as a source of income that would pay rent and grocery bills but as a *common sense procedure.* "Domestic" architects learned that house planning was so complicated and so compelling in personal attention to every detail of design and construction they had to demand extra compensation.

Possibly this compensation is unnecessarily high if fixed at 15 per cent as Mr. Walsh proposes. One must remember that the average fee to an architect is 5 per cent and to a contractor 10 per cent—a total, above net construction cost of the same 15 per cent that Mr. Walsh upholds as commensurate for the services of one and not two parties. It is questionable whether your hard-headed business man will see the logic in that approach. Nor is it admissible that even in the $5,000.00-$7,500.00 bracket, a 12 per cent fee is inadequate. House planning, to be profitable, must, to be sure, include a higher commission but even more imperatively it must entail *less cost in developing plans.* My own office is trained to complete a set of working drawings for houses in this price range in two days. During two additional days we call in some seven or eight contractors and material men and on the fifth day, we have a bona-fide bid guaranteed to be within 5 per cent of final cost. We don't render window panes or brick courses. Duplicate openings are merely *numbered.* We avoid all dimensions. But our two-day plans and half-day specifications give the contractors all the information they require.

In presenting a sales talk to a prospect, I explain that this 12 per cent fee compares favorably with the 15 per cent or 16 per cent or 18 per cent he would pay both contractor and architect under standard methods. I show him that a general contractor has the right to employ any sub-contractors he may choose; that once awarded a contract on a low bid, he is likely to shop around for lower "subs" who may not be up to snuff. Finally I tell him of cases in which one owner's money was used to help pay the bills on another job and that as a consequence, unless he had a bond (in my opinion a worthless document), he runs a pretty good chance of lien entanglements.

I try to explain the selective method of securing three bids in each department of the work from qualified craftsmen and then submitting those bids to him—the man who is most concerned—for careful study. I advise that under competent plans and specifications, all three bids should vary less than 5 per cent. If two are practically the same and one is unreasonably high, it means that the high man is either guessing or is perhaps out of

his class. If he is low, he may be undesirable as he has probably missed something and would try to trim his finished work to compensate his error.

On the score of custom-made working drawings and specifications versus stock plans and the slap-dash two-page summaries of the jerry-builder, I get to first base. And in the "here is a list of 21 bidders on seven contracts —you look 'em over," I often make a home run. When I explain that my enlarged fee is still much less than he would pay an architect *and* a contractor I discover that he is feeling for his fountain pen.

Who can question the sheer horse sense of such methods of building a home—an investment, by the way, which ranks as the largest and most important in the average man's career? Under the old method, the owner entrusts a 12 or 15-year investment to a "contractor." This contractor is very likely to have graduated from the ranks of carpenter foreman with no knowledge or training in engineering. Using a set of good, bad or indifferent plans, he contacts a group of five or six friendly subcontractors who know they won't get the job unless they "whittle." The contractor then submits the total of friendly, whittled bids to the owner who agrees to a contract involving either the casual superintendence that a 5 per cent or 6 per cent architectural fee permits or is lulled by the contractor's persuasion that *no* superintendence is required. The net result of such haphazard methods is disaster —leaking basement walls, settlement, plaster cracks, trim that opens at the joint, a heating plant that misses two North rooms in cold weather, downspout drains that don't function, paint that checks on the outside and washes off on the inside every Spring cleaning.

As against this, the separate contract procedure results in a completed house *that may cost as much* since the savings in combined fees to architect and contractor can be used in the employment of better sub-contractors. It is a *certified* house that has been watched in its every step of development so that the aches and pains of the "contractor" house are eliminated.

The contractors of the United States have built 90 per cent of our homes without architectural service. Of that formidable array not 5 per cent have the slightest distinction in design. Perhaps 25 per cent are well built, the other 70 per cent are "just houses" — inarticulate, uncomfortable and a general blot on the landscape. Isn't it high time that architects stepped out and finally and permanently persuaded the public that we are worthy of our hire?

For discussion of the "merits of old and new architecture," this letter was written by CHARLES E. HODGES, *formerly Resident Architect at Stanford University, California, criticising one of Talbot F. Hamlin's critical articles.*

As a subscriber for many years to your valuable paper, PENCIL POINTS, and having met you when residing in N. Y. C., may I request that you publish the following criticism on the article in your June number, entitled "Reviewing Contemporary American Architecture" by Talbot F. Hamlin.

This may open up a valuable discussion of the merits of old and new architecture, and would be a good addition to your magazine.

The word "modernesque" now classified with architecture, covers a multitude of sins, and likewise a great many virtues.

Candidly, I lean towards the basis of classical architecture, as from my early training in a London architect's office, and the Imperial Institute, I learnt my proportions from the Classical Orders, that today dominates the well-established architectural profession. I see a great deal of beauty in the well-designed modernesque architecture, relegated to public buildings, etc., but cannot see the same result, where used for residential work. After these few preliminary remarks, permit me to venture on my criticism of the article in question:

The Highlander Folk School at Monteagle — The minor amount of architecture expressed in this design is hardly worthy of criticism, "enuff said."

Wm. P. Henderson's Navajo house of religion—The exterior shows very little architecture. The interior would give one the impression that he who enters here should not have any expectations of returning.

House at Madison, Wisconsin—Insignificant in design, the "coops" above the porch would be better omitted.

H. P. Clarke's residence, San Francisco—I admit, "simple sincerity."

W. W. Wurster's beach house—Certainly of wood, badly-proportioned, with no design.

House, by Victorine and Samuel Homsey—A well-designed and proportioned "modernesque" residence.

"Regency," by Hughes Keyes — Principal criticism is the roof line, presumably unbroken, of little beauty.

Residence at St. Louis, R. C. Hall, Architect—The windows appear too large for wall space, the classical revival being a question of doubt.

Cameron Clark's Fairfield town house, Connecticut—Pleasing in design and also it is well-studied.

The Bryan Memorial at Washington, Conn. — Designed by the same architect, design is good, although the high gable looks a little out of proportion.

Third Unitarian Church, by Paul Schweiker — Pleasing materials may have been used, on very little architecture.

The Lansing Terrace Housing Development, Washington — The sculpture, by D. Olney, is undoubtedly good but the remainder of the building is too much of the warehouse type, the two-story buildings resembling alms houses.

Emergency Hospital, by Holabird & Root—Strictly severe type of the modernesque.

Dr. Shanley's office, by Harris Armstrong—I trust that the doctor found plenty of light on the remaining walls of his building.

A draftsman who prefers to remain anonymous here, for "good and sufficient reasons," advises us that troubles are not ended by getting a job, in some architectural offices where he worked.

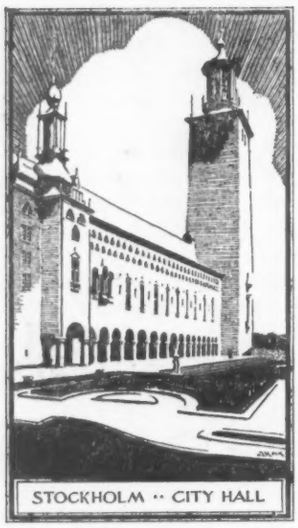
In several offices from the Middle West to the South, I have been engaged at a stated figure per week. Now, from 25 years' experience in 28 states and the District of Columbia, it is to be assumed that a "week" means from 38 to certainly not over 44 hours: in keeping with the efforts of our Government at Washington, not over 40 hours.

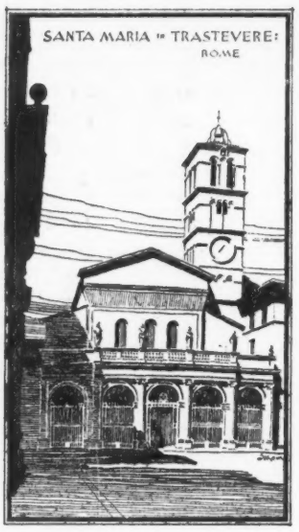
Entering on duty in these offices, I found that men were being worked overtime to as high as 57 hours a week, *without any additional compensation*, resulting in the architects virtually getting two extra days' work out of each man, without paying for same.

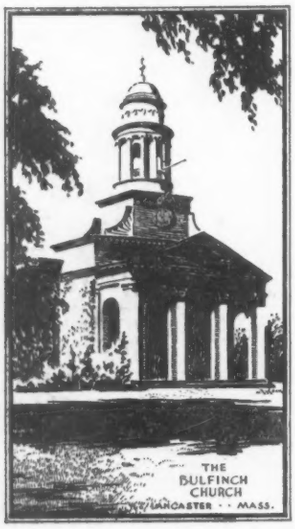
In other offices, the practice is slightly different. The men are engaged to work overtime with single pay instead of time and a half as has been the established custom for over twenty years—and thus encouraged, a new man throws in his best. But when pay day comes, the architect "very much regrets that collections, etc., have been disappointing," and the draftsman is handed, as in my case, $20.00 instead of $52.00, with promises of "near future" adjustment.

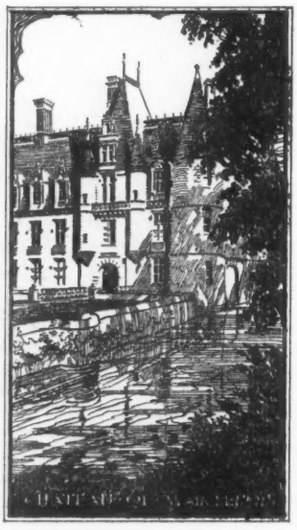
I have never stood for this "game," although many men are victims of it, getting steadily farther and farther behind; and very foolishly they drag along, "getting out of it what they can."

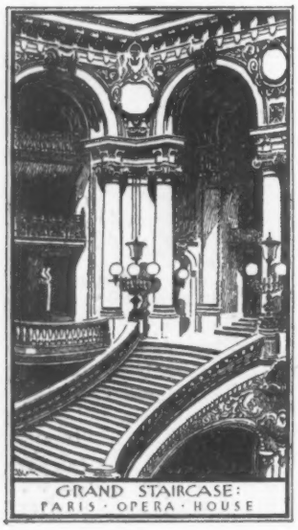
I think it would be a great service to your readers and subscribers, if this condition were boldly written up and draftsmen and designers, warned to "stand up for their rights."

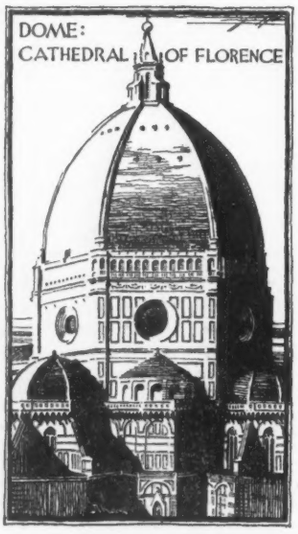


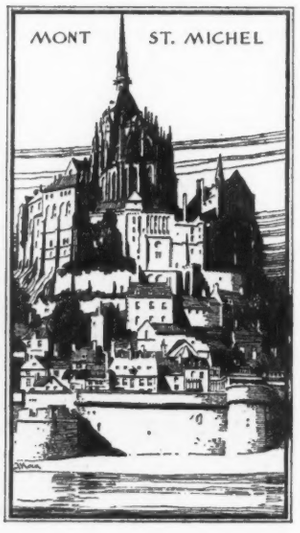




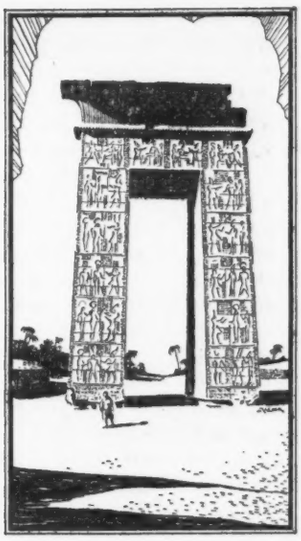


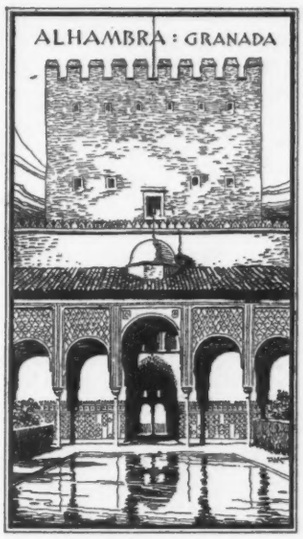


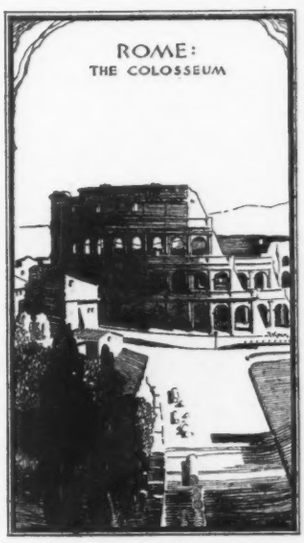


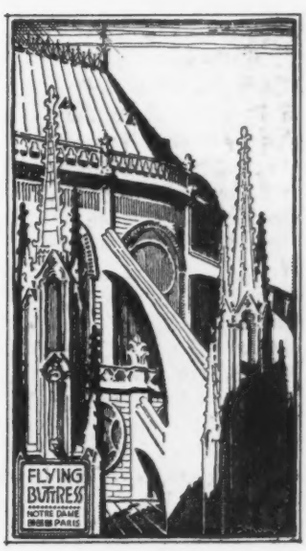


These pen and ink drawings of architectural monuments of the ages were made by Frederick H. Kock, A.I.A., to accompany newspaper articles on construction problems









Intended to help educate the public, architecturally, the series from which these drawings were selected has been presented weekly in the Cincinnati "Times-Star"

Since publication of John J. Klaber's letter on housing, in our last THRESHING FLOOR, *Klaber and the editors have had ample evidence of reader-interest—and dissent!* BEN WISEMAN, *Architect, of Los Angeles, Calif., files a protest against our hero's name.*

I HAVE been reading with great interest the July issue of PENCIL POINTS, particularly the section titled "The Threshing Floor," which is indeed a worthy and desirable forum for the purpose of frank discussions of professional problems.

However, important as this may be, I am greatly irritated at the *lack of decency and good manners* as exemplified by the article written by Mr. John J. Klaber with reference to his characters in the piece, and I protest against his choice, because it *does not* sound "just as nice" as John Q. Public, or some other less conspicuous name.

If this section of PENCIL POINTS is avowedly dedicated to professional problems, it should be strictly confined thereto, and not permitted to be infused with unfavorable inferences at the expense of any personality or group.

In closing, I do not believe, that Mr. Klaber maliciously chose his characters, but I do feel that a much better choice could have been made by him, or at least revised by the editors.

To this and other letters received by KLABER, *who is an Architect, of 144 W. 55th St., New York, he responds with supplemental information and ideas on the Federal housing program.*

THE comments I have received on my little story about Mr. Iskowitz, which you were kind enough to print in PENCL POINTS for July, indicate that by expressing myself in the language of parables I failed to be as clear as I should have wished. No doubt I should have foreseen this, remembering that this has been the usual fate of parables for thousands of years.

My purpose was not to express an opinion on the political issues of the day, and I regret that I should have been interpreted in this sense. While I believe that most of the measures adopted by the present administration were motivated by the necessities of the situation, and would necessarily be continued by any future administration, whatever its expressed principles might be, I do not believe that any public agency is exempt from criticism. I was trying therefore to appraise the government's experiments in the field of housing, and to look forward a little, in view of the housing situation as a whole. And I do not hold either with those who denounce every public experiment in new fields, or with those others who utter the sacred name of Housing in tones of reverential awe, accompanied by profound genuflections.

If we accept President Roosevelt's estimate that one third of the nation is in urgent need of better housing (and as a rough estimate, which is all it was intended to be, I consider it rather conservative than otherwise) we face the need of a forty billion dollar building program, to which may be added perhaps another twenty billion or so, to take care of normal growth and inevitable obsolescence, during the next decade or two. No exact figures are possible or necessary, but it is evident at a glance that the government's present program of spending, amounting in this field to a couple of hundred million dollars a year, though a considerable sum in itself, is not enough even to keep up with obsolescence, let alone the far greater task of rehousing all who now suffer from bad living conditions. Some way must therefore be found to promote a vastly greater housing program, whether by public authorities or by private initiative, or by some combination of the two.

The European countries that have accomplished the most in housing have found means to coordinate public and private building in this field. This we have not yet attempted. The amounts that any Congress is likely to vote for housing can do no more than promote experimentation and set standards for others to follow. But if these standards are set too high, as was undoubtedly the case with much of the PWA work, they tend to discourage private initiative rather than to guide it into better methods. Nor is public housing necessarily limited to pure subsidy. Europe has used many other devices, and while they may not all be fitted to our purpose, they should not all be rejected without careful study. What a really comprehensive public housing program might be I suggested in an article published in *Building and Modernization* for last December, that journal having accepted it after several others had rejected it as too visionary. Perhaps its details had little merit, but it surely was justified in the attempt to look at the housing needs of the country as a whole, in view of the size of the task and the necessity of building new houses faster than old ones become unfit for use.

Building is at present, and has been for years, one of the most depressed of all our great industries. Recovery in this field would be of the greatest value to the entire nation, and suitable means for accomplishing such recovery must be found. My purpose in writing to you as I did was to evoke discussion of possible means by which housing improvement and recovery in the building industry might both be advanced. Perhaps you can arrange to print these supplementary remarks, stating in plain English what was possibly not altogether clear in the form in which I originally wrote it.

And L. J. CALL, *of The Carborundum Company, Niagara Falls, N. Y., takes his stand with Klaber, in criticising the U. S. housing experiments.*

I HAVE read with interest Mr. John J. Klaber's article in your July issue and was somewhat surprised to note that you were not quite in favor with the sentiment and ideas expressed by Mr. Klaber. I would expect anyone in business and with his feet on the ground would fully realize that the manner in which the U. S. Housing Corp. has handled the housing project is open to a great many honest criticisms and objections.

Last summer I had the privilege of seeing what the British, Norwegians and Germans had done in licking the housing problem and I must say that they did a better job than our government housing authority has done. However, I wish to thank you for being open-minded enough to publish Mr. Klaber's article.

This letter on the Sub-Contract Method, by HOWELL TAYLOR, *of Beirut, Syria, was received many months before H. V. Walsh's recent article on the same subject and now is printed also for its competent presentation.*

THREE limiting factors determine the cost of any building project, namely, quality of materials, quantity of construction and the client's stipulated maximum of funds available. It is evident that if two of these factors are fixed (within reasonable limits) the other must vary. Accordingly, it becomes the architect's job to balance the three to the end that a satisfactory result is obtained for the client. To the extent that a client realizes the exigencies which exist in accomplishing this result and insofar as he understands the machinery of construction practice, is this entirely possible.

The lay public knows so little about building—and yet thinks it knows so much—that it is extremely hard for a client to recognize the difference between a thoroughly sound structure

and the speculative, jerry-built type. It is easy enough to see the difference between Chevrolet and Cadillac motor cars but not so easy to see from the front of a shop window the difference between a thirty-five and a fifty dollar suit of clothes. Education and advertising have made Mr. Public know, however, that more frequently than not he gets what he pays for and if he pays $50 for a suit of clothes instead of $35 he is getting actually over 40% more of real value.

This state of mind must be established toward construction for there is a considerable belief that by some hocus-pocus it is possible in the construction field to buy a Cadillac house at a Chevrolet price. There has been, no doubt, some basis of fact for this state of mind, however, for many honest contractors know so little about costs that they are all too willing to reduce their estimated profits to little or nothing for the sake of getting the job, hoping to "make it up on extras," or to gain some profit through careful buying of materials after they have signed the contract. One is reminded of the familiar cartoon often seen in contractors' offices entitled "the successful contractor." Agonized with fear and dripping with perspiration, a telegram in his hand advising that he has the job, he is saying, "For God's sake, what did I leave out?" It is simply up to those of us who are committed to the building field to approach a correction of this hocus-pocus impression from both sides of the fence. Not only must the client actually be shown what he is paying for, but building costs must be more accurately d e t e r m i n e d through searching analysis.

The sub-contract method of carrying on the business details of building goes far toward correcting some of the evils with which the construction field is infested. It is more reasonable, more economical and safer than highly competitive general contracting, and when used fairly it enables the client to understand more readily the problems of architect and contractor. In smaller work particularly it has proved entirely satisfactory.

Naturally, the architect's job becomes more complex but he is paid accordingly for the work done. Most architects make a practice of separating the pipe or mechanical trades from the general contract anyway which means they are working with four contracts—general, heating, plumbing, and electric wiring, and in addition they buy separately many items of special equipment. It is only a step farther to break up the general division into a number of sub-contracts and ask all contractors for a number of alternates and itemized figures on different equipment. If the client is kept in constant touch with the bidding he finds himself in much closer contact with the job cost—a fact which takes the mystery out of the process, thus enabling him to judge for himself whether he is getting full value or whether some contractor is charging a "long" profit.

It enables the architect more easily to keep within the client's stipulated maximum of cost, which amounts to about the same thing in the client's mind as a guarantee of cost, providing leeway is given on one or both of the other two factors involved (that is, quantity of equipment or features included, and quality of materials). Under this method the architect becomes a sort of shopper for the best bargains, and when he keeps the client closely informed of the results of the bargain hunting it is much easier for the client to decide, for instance, whether he prefers a water softener which costs $200, or wall tile in his bathroom at about the same figure. In other words when a stipulated maximum of cost is set the whole process becomes a careful balancing of fund use against the cost of individual items by both architect and client to determine of just what the building will consist when finished. None of this implies bid-peddling, of course.

Every piece of equipment and every construction feature has its value. If these are stated in an itemized list as nearly as possible, it is a simple matter to pick out the necessary items and the ones which are more desirable to the client than others. The client sees all of the wheels working and recognizes to a greater degree the difference in values of the equipment or construction features he is buying.

In addition to all of this, there is no question but that there is considerable duplication of effort by the architect and the office of a well-organized general contractor, and it is duplication which is adding to the client's construction cost. The sub-contract method will remove the general contractor from the picture as such, but still permits him to bid on labor or separate divisions of the work and even furnish a general foreman. This does not imply that the architect should engage day labor although I know of cases where this has been done successfully. But it does mean that separate contracts are let for each division of the work and equipment.

Under this method of procedure a fixed fee for the architect is almost necessary. Take for instance a house costing $15,000 complete, the fee should be determined at the outset as say, 15% or $2,250, and should be deducted from the available funds thus leaving $12,750 with which to work, and all of which is freed from the usual carrying charges and profits of the general contractor. It surely is up to the architect to know enough about building costs to be willing to alter plans and specifications as may be necessary until he has used intelligently and to the client's liking, the $12,750 for construction. If he shoots so wide of the mark that his first bids are more than 15% out of the way he simply doesn't know his business and he should get busy.

By no means should an architect guarantee a price for construction but it is a part of his professional duty to guard his client against expensive changing of plans in case the figures are much above the stipulated maximum. It is my custom to insert in my contract with a client a clause stating that I shall make such changes as are necessary to bring the bids within the desired amount. This gives the client a greater sense of security and inspires greater confidence in the architect and in the profession.

In addition to all of the above I can see no reason why a variant of this plan could not be developed which will include the general contractor, especially on larger work where the bulk of shop drawing preparation, accounting and cost checking becomes a real factor. If we accept the fact that every construction job must carry with it a certain amount of service charge which cannot be eliminated, and that the client, who thinks he is getting the service of designing and supervision of his job for nothing or at a great bargain, is only fooling himself, is it not possible to charge up 16% as a legitimate service charge against a job at the outset, that is 10% for the contractor and 6% for the architect, then proceed with the process outlined above? Should the ultimate job cost actually run less than anticipated the saving could be divided equally between client, contractor, and architect. In the case of unforeseen higher costs, the merits of each item should be investigated carefully by the same three in joint conference and charged against whichever one of the three proved to be the instigating cause of the higher cost. Delays from natural causes and similar items would naturally be charged against the owner.

This variant is predicated, of course, on the assumption that an honest contractor, who is responsible, will build the job. Various methods could be devised for selecting the successful contractor without eliminating all competition in bidding which might seem to be a necessary adjunct to keeping

the general contractor in the picture.

Now to sum up, just what does the sub-contract method accomplish?

1. It enables the client to spend what he expected and destroys the "extra" bugaboo.
2. It removes the possibility of excessive contractors' profits and minimizes duplication of effort.
3. It adds to the architect's burden but he is paid an additional fee, and builds up greater confidence in the profession, as a necessary cog in the machinery of construction.
4. It is undoubtedly cheaper for the client, or conversely, the client can buy more building for a stipulated sum.
5. It helps to defeat the competition which real estate offices and contractors offer to architects since it enables the architect to render "a complete building service" with the advantages of professional architectural training included.

Don Graf's characteristic mockery of three-legged restaurant tables was hardly off the press in July, when a reply was received from HAROLD DRAPER VERNAM, *Brooklyn equipment consultant, as follows:*

IF ARCHITECTS are familiar with bottles, in an amateur way, of course, they should be doubly familiar with tables, both amateurishly and professionally. So you may hear something about pedestal tables from them, apropos The Disregard of the Obvious by Mr. Don Graf.

As an opener let me suggest:

1. The table in the picture hasn't 3 legs, as imputed, but a pedestal with a tripod base.

2. It has three points of support because a three-legged or three-footed table will fit on any floor, no matter how uneven, without wobbling. When floors can be made without bumps or depressions it will no longer be necessary to fold up a menu or a match book to wedge beneath one of the legs of a four-legged table. Sometimes a knife or fork will do; then you can ask the beautiful hostess for another.

3. The pedestal is heavy, the lower part being of cast iron, and the table will not easily upset. Besides, it is ill-mannered to lean all of your weight on your elbows; half, only, is requisite. One who does otherwise deserves a cup of coffee in the face, or elsewhere.

4. It is quite obvious that when a chair is occupied its legs are too far from the center of the table to interfere with the tripod or base. The picture itself shows that.

5. The apron strengthens the top, and makes lighter and cheaper construction feasible. It may, rarely, interfere with some one's legs, but I doubt it. Or is leg-crossing essential to eating? Perhaps it is the bottle that requires crossed legs — I wouldn't know.

6. Why not design a perfect table and try to sell it to quick lunch restaurants? Something might be accomplished, who knows?

7. What is the I.Q. of a critic?

Young engineers, as well as young architects, have ideas about education for the profession, as this letter from ANTONIO DI LORENZO, *of 555 10th St., West New York, N. J., shows.*

I WAS very interested in Wiley Thomas's letter in the July issue of PENCIL POINTS, voicing the opinion of a young student as to what is wrong with architectural education. Apparently the architectural student of today wants clear and concise definitions; he wants to know why certain things are done. Questions of this sort take Father by surprise, and with reason. Neither Phidias nor Michelangelo could have answered similar questions in their time. It would be just as absurd for a student of electrical engineering to seek a satisfactory definition of electricity, or for a student of astronomy wishing to know why the Earth spins on its axis.

Why must young architects wish to begin applying the microscope to their art? Why must they too wish to come under the influence of technology, of rational methods, and of hard mathematical facts which have engulfed Western Civilization since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution? There should be no doubt that the microscope, when used upon art, causes self-consciousness and the loss of perspective in the mind of the artist, with the consequent degeneration of his aesthetic principles.

The sooner architects realize that they can not follow the same impersonal technique used by scientists, the better it will be for all concerned. It would be a more beautiful world if architects in general did not attempt to introduce new ideas in their work without careful thought and long practice. It is impossible for architects to keep pace with scientists because architecture is a product of man's inner self, while science is purely objective. Architecture should not be a cold conglomeration of nondescript ideas, but an art full of warm human feeling based on aesthetic intuition.

May a young engineer suggest to Father Architect, whenever he is confronted with unreasonably embarrassing questions, that he answer, "Search your Soul, my son."?

One of the most delightful letters on our desk was the prompt response of K. M. NISHIMOTO, *Draftsman, of Los Angeles, Calif., to our S O S while fathoming the mystery of the Japanese letter in the July* THRESHING FLOOR.

A LETTER from a Japanese subscriber in his own tongue published in the July, 1938, issue of PENCIL POINTS was a source of great amusement to me. Although I know I am not the sole Japanese reader of your honorable magazine, I hasten to relieve the editors from mental strain.

With a decided increase of the use of Japanese words in the daily American vocabulary, such as "kimono," "ohio," "sake," etc., and also with the creation of that great little indestructible character known to the moviegoers as Mr. Moto, Mr. Miyazaki, the author of this letter may have estimated that a few of these foreign language specialists may be found at random and at least one may be found perching in your office.

The letter is a reply to your inquiry as to the nature of his work. He claims that he is the head of an interior decoration and furniture concern in Tokio. In particular he contracts work of a certain motion picture studio in Japan.

In the second paragraph he apologizes for not replying to your persistent inquiry. Further on he humbly requests you to send him literature or catalogues of a representative furniture firm, such as Marshall Field. He promises to be responsible for the postage and any other incidental expenses.

A shortest possible reply to the letter that I can suggest, which may help him to understand without an aid of a dictionary, will be: "So sorry, excuse please," a la Mr. Moto fashion, but then you may want to retain his good will and his future subscription.

P.S. In case you did not notice, this gentleman has an excellent writing.

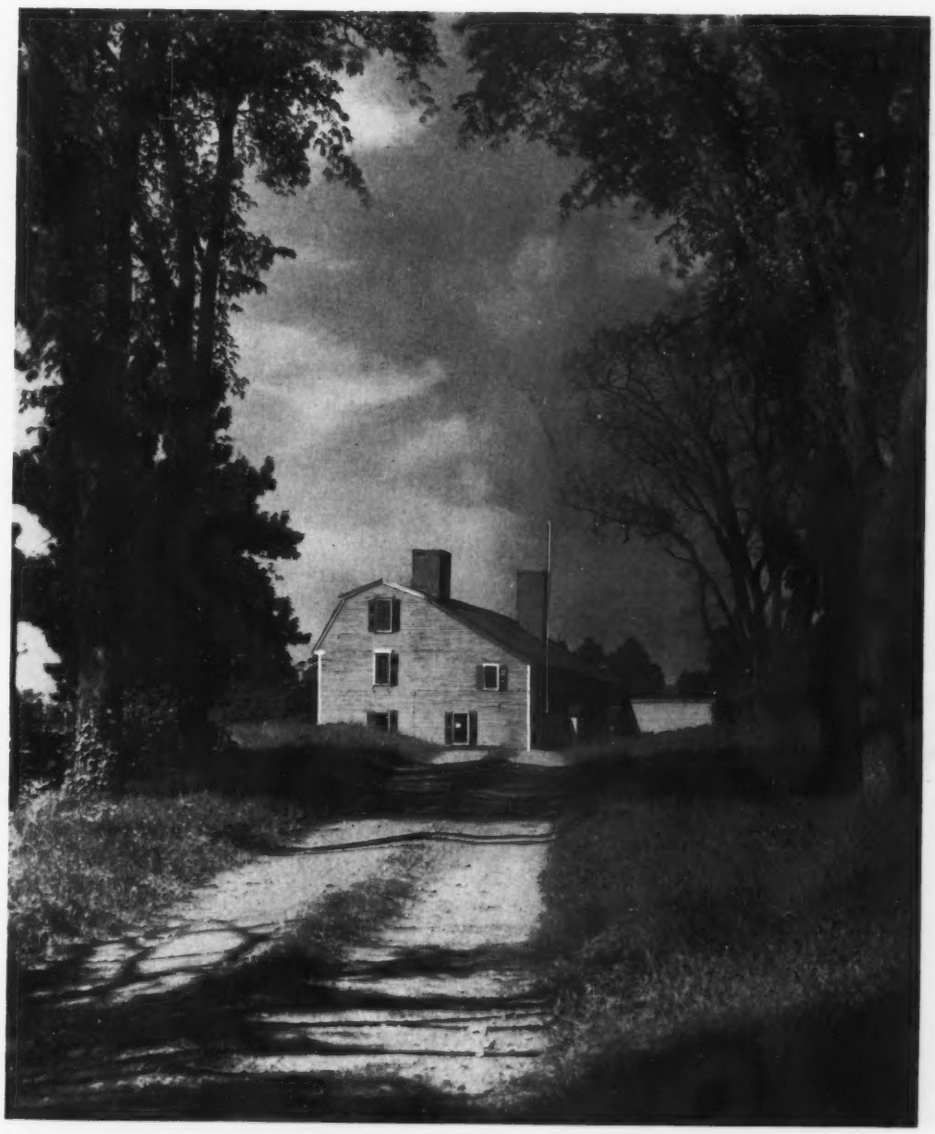
EDITOR'S NOTE: *The staccato reverberations of the later* GRAF-VERNAM *letters (needless to say, neither gave an inch of ground); another translation of the Japanese letter, by* RICHARD YOSHIJIRO MINE, *Draftsman, of Flint, Mich.; and a sharp inquiry if "anyone really appreciates the Monograph Series" from* CURTIS BESSINGER, *Draftsman, of Kansas City, Kan., who thinks "there are more vital matters than the profile of a moulding," are but a few of many other letters which must be omitted in this limited space, welcome as they were to the editors.*

THE MONOGRAPH SERIES
Records of Early American Architecture

Edited by RUSSELL F. WHITEHEAD, A. I. A.

Measured Drawings by FRANK CHOUTEAU BROWN, A. I. A., *Associate Editor*
Photographs by ARTHUR C. HASKELL, *Architectural Photographer*

Volume XXIV · Number 5



COL. JESSE PUTNAM HOUSE—C. 1750—DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

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THE ELIAS ENDICOTT PORTER FARMHOUSE—1737—LOCUST STREET, PUTNAMVILLE, DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

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Danvers (Old "Salem Village"), Massachusetts

by FRANK CHOUTEAU BROWN, A. I. A.

STEMMING, as the township of Danvers does, so directly from the Salem settlement, it follows that much of its early beginnings already has been disclosed in a fairly recent number of The Monograph Series (Volume XXIII, No. 2). It was one of the many townships that were later set apart from the area originally established, as within the Naumkeag (later to be known as the Salem) settlement. As they exist today, Danvers includes a portion of the land that was the original "Salem Village," or "Farms"; which also then included most of the present area of Peabody, which lies between Danvers and Salem to the south and east.

Beverly and Wenham also extend along its eastern side, with Wenham and Topsfield on the north; and Topsfield and Middleton on the west. All these townships also were included in the original Salem, with the addition of Manchester and Marblehead, although it only included a part of Topsfield. Indeed, the original grant, given by "the Council for New England" to Endecott and the Dorchester Company included most of Essex County—and parts of Norfolk, Suffolk and Middlesex, as well!

Later, in 1629, the Charter of King Charles the First, gave to "the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England" power for its "freemen" to elect annually their own Governor, Deputy, and eighteen Assistants—who made up "the Great and General Court," with authority to establish laws over the new settlement. It was true that a "freeman" had to be also a member of the established church, in good and regular standing, but, when it was discovered that these elections had been taken over by the settlers themselves (whereas it had evidently been originally intended that the electoral government would be handled altogether by the English members of "the Company"); it was arranged—after fifty-five years of operation—to substitute another charter, with rather less liberal terms, for the earlier document of the Council for New England.

Peabody remained a part of the Danvers area until 1855, when it became a separate township. It had formerly been known as Brooksby. And Danvers did not secure its full and complete independence as a township, even in 1752, when, after a long struggle for separation from Salem, it was granted separate town government. But only as a "District" without individual representation in the General Court.

Although the first profitable industry of the Salem settlement was fishing, it was not long before a large part of this business was taken over by the Marblehead community and about Salem Harbor there gradually developed the more profitable business of maritime merchandising on the larger scale available at the time, until the town's piers and warehouses were soon handling the products of the ports of all the world. But, meanwhile, there was also the need of growing the farm produce necessary to maintain the daily life of the settlement, and it was soon discovered that the region about the Harbor was none too fertile, and the land none too well adapted to this purpose. And so Salem Village—or "the Farms"—became the farming center of the settlement. There, on land adjacent to the Harbor, to the north and west, was much rich soil disposed upon gently rolling hillsides and fertile valleys, and more protected from the sometimes boisterous winds and storms along the seacoast.

Gov. John Endecott had in 1632 been granted by the General Court, a large farmstead for himself in what is now Danversport, in recognition of his services to the Colony. He called it "Little Orchard Farm" and a part of the original property was still owned by the late William C. Endicott, at the time of his death a year or two ago. Governor Endecott ordered fruit trees from England and by 1640 had planted a large orchard, of which the famous "Endecott Pear Tree" may be now the sole survivor.

In fact, three early grants comprised most of the present areas of Danversport and Peabody. Besides the Endecott lands, these included the grant to the Rev. Samuel Skelton, (made in July, 1632) and that to John Humphrey (1635) which extended nearly to

the Lynnfield boundary. From 1635 on, many additional interior land grants were made to those families who wished to carry on farming in the community. Thus, by 1638 there was a well-defined separate settlement in the "Village" or "Farms" area, first established under the Rev. John Phillips, who later returned to England. These later grants of farm lands were all made by the Salem selectmen, including one (made about 1640) to John Putnam—whose family name has since become indissolubly associated with the history of the town, as well as that of the Commonwealth and the Country during the Revolution. About 1644 another grant of some 300 acres was made to John Porter, in "Danvers Plains," and he was later credited with establishing the first tannery.

After several petitions to the Salem fathers, in 1672 the "Salem Village Parish" was allowed to be organized. This included Danvers — outside the "Port" — about half of Peabody, and a part of Beverly. The word "Parish," as used in this connection meant rather a "town" than a "church," so that from that time on until 1752, when Danvers was finally "set off" from Salem, the parish records actually were the records of the town.

THE GEORGE JACOBS HOUSE
DANVERSPORT, MASSACHUSETTS

In 1673 was built the first Meeting House, a structure of 34 x 28 feet, on a site that has been identified as in a field now near the corner of Hobart and Forest Streets. The old "Training Field" for the militia company organized in 1671, was the "Common" at Danvers Highlands, given to the town in 1709 by Deacon Nathaniel Ingersoll. A few years later, in 1676, a "Watch House" was erected on "Watch House Hill," an eminence about at the "Highlands" parsonage pasture, although the Church in this section was not organized until 1689.

In the "Witchcraft Delusion," which flourished in Salem Village in 1692, the First Village Meeting House—which was also used as the "Town House" of the community was employed for the "examination" of some of the victims—and it may have been partly to help forget this regrettable hysteria that a new Meeting House was begun in 1700, on "Watch House Hill." It was a structure that has been described as nearly square in plan (the dimensions having been 48 x 43 feet) and built at a cost of 330£. It had a hip roof of the rather steep pitch of the period, a "tower" or cupola story rising from the centre of the roof, and interior galleries. It continued in use until 1752 and was finally demolished in 1786. In 1710, the "Middle Precinct" was given permission to build its own church; and by 1711 a new Meeting House, 51 by 38 feet, had been constructed. The contributing area included what is now known as Peabody and a part of Middleton (which was not set apart until 1728), then known as "Mills Hill." Finally, in 1752, the "District of Danvers" was incorporated, but without being given the privilege of a delegate to the General Court. The town records show that at that time there were 25 slaves living within the new "District" limits.

In connection with the "Witchcraft Delusion," there remain three structures in which dwelt individuals whose names were associated with its history. The Sarah Prince-Osborn House, 1660, now at 273 Maple St., but formerly on Spring St., has been both moved and remodelled. Sarah Osborn was among the first accused, was tried on March 1, and died while in Boston Jail the following May. Rebecca Nurse was the fourth woman accused by Tituba, a West Indian slave of the Rev. Samuel Parris, minister of the Salem Village church, in whose household the delusion originated. Rebecca Nurse was then seventy years old, and lived in an old house off Pine St., built in 1678, which was rather too thoroughly "restored" in 1909; but which nevertheless still provides a good popular idea of the appearance of a seventeenth century dwelling. She was hanged July 19, 1692, and her body placed

View of North Side Showing "Lean-to" at Rear

View of Rear and West End

THE REBECCA NURSE HOUSE—1678—DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

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in the family burying ground, now to be found in a field near some pines off Collins St.

The third, the George Jacobs House, is now in process of disintegration, having been abandoned several years ago after a fire that damaged one end. Jacobs was tried and hanged on August 19, 1692. The remains of the Jacobs house, built about 1658, may still be seen in a field overlooking Waters' River, looking out toward the Beverly shore to the east, and the original "Little Orchard Farm" of Governor Endecott, with the three-story Reed-Porter House (White Pine Series, Volume III, No. 1; pages 2 and 6—there named the Crowninshield House, after Benjamin Crowninshield, one of its occupants) in the foreground to the west. Even in its final stages it displays the sturdy construction of its time, with the heavy pinned framework, brick nogged, still resisting the untimely results of its exposure to the weather through all the years.

Another principal association of this area is concerned with its occupancy by Gen. Thomas Gage, the last Provincial Governor of Massachusetts, during 1774, just previous to the Revolution. He resided at "The Lindens," a fine house built for a summer residence by Robert ("King") Hooper of Marblehead, in 1754, and a room in the Col. Jeremiah Page House, a narrow gambrel dwelling built about 1754 and formerly facing on Danvers Square, (but now removed to 11 Page St. for the headquarters of the Danvers Historical Society), for his office, because of its view over Salem Harbor.

OLDER PART AT REAR—1648. FRONT PORTION ADDED 1744
THE GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM HOUSE—DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

But probably the name most generally and widely associated with the town of Danvers is that of the Putnam family of Revolutionary fame, of whose houses there still remain a large number in this township. The two doorways measured for this issue, (from the Col. Jesse Putnam and Samuel Putnam

South Front

Rear With "Lean-to" and Vestibules

THE COL. JESSE PUTNAM HOUSE—C. 1750—DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

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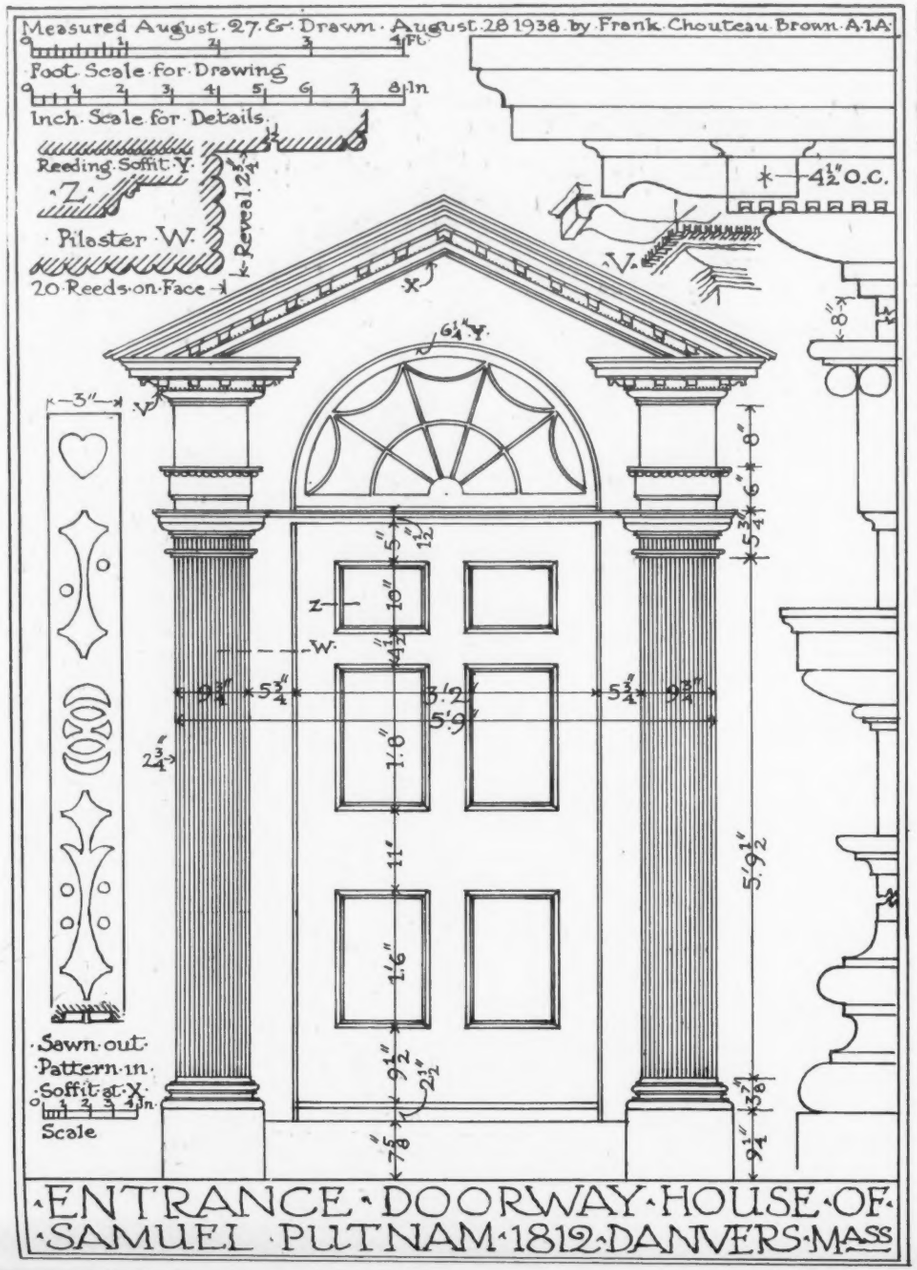
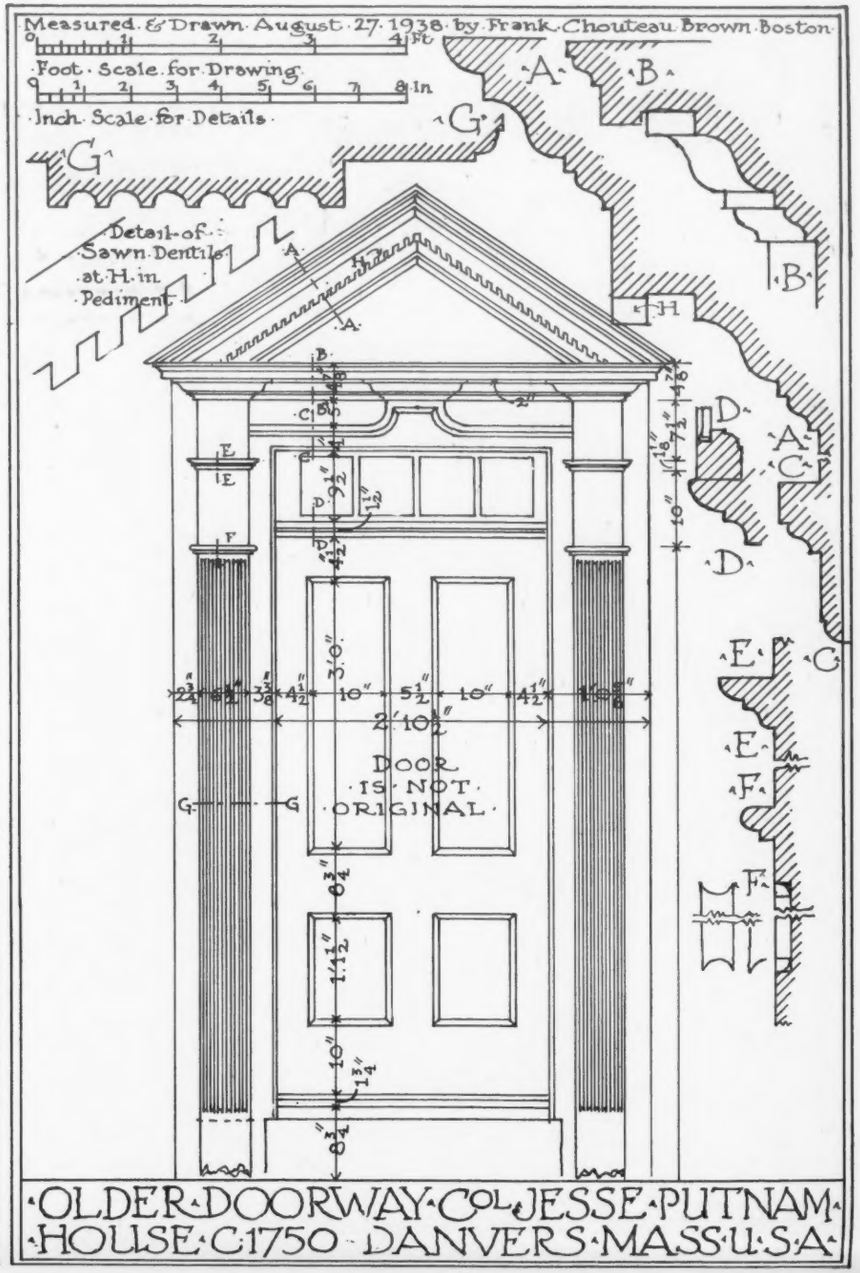

Measured August 27 & Drawn August 28 1938 by Frank Chouteau Brown A.I.A.
Foot Scale for Drawing
Inch Scale for Details
Reeding Soffit Y
Z
Pilaster W
Reveal 2½"
20 Reeds on Face
4½" O.C.
V
X
6¼"
8"
3"
Sawn out Pattern in Soffit at X
Scale
ENTRANCE DOORWAY HOUSE OF SAMUEL PUTNAM 1812 DANVERS MASS


Measured & Drawn August 27 1938 by Frank Chouteau Brown Boston
Foot Scale for Drawing
Inch Scale for Details
Detail of Sawn Dentils at H in Pediment
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
DOOR IS NOT ORIGINAL
OLDER DOORWAY COL JESSE PUTNAM HOUSE C 1750 DANVERS MASS U.S.A.

ENTRANCE DOORWAY—1812—(*See Drawings above*)
THE SAMUEL PUTNAM HOUSE, DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

OLDER DOORWAY—ABOUT 1750—(*See Drawings above*)
THE JESSE PUTNAM HOUSE, DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

houses) show an early and a late example, of which the latter displays a few typical details and mouldings found repeated in many other houses in the vicinity.

Danvers also provides several examples of "double" houses, one being the Col. Jesse Putnam Farmhouse (1750), a short distance beyond which is the Joseph Putnam house, where Gen. Israel Putnam was born, near the old Newburyport turnpike. The older part (1648) of this latter house is at the rear, there having been a newer portion (added in 1744) built entirely across the front toward the street.

The James Putnam house (which is located about midway between the two other houses of the same family just mentioned, but a little way from the main highway), gained its present sizeable gambrel by degrees. It was probably first a two-story "one-room" house; then widened by the addition of another room, adding to the width of its front. Later, the old narrow gambrel was heightened and widened to cover two more rooms, added across the rear of the older portion; the whole still being enclosed by a wide gambrel rather than merely a "lean-to," in order to secure two full-height rooms across the rear upon second floor.

The Elias E. Porter Farmhouse on Locust Street, although having a flat sloping roof with end gables, also grew to its present size in exactly the same way; by the same first three steps of enlargement. To that outline, however, some owner also added a "semi-lean-to" extending partly across the rear of the house, and a finely proportioned end vestibule. The northern end of this house has the unusual fenestration of five narrow fifteen-light windows on both the first and second floors, and this farm at one time boasted twenty-seven buildings! Much of the interior detail dates from its later enlargement (probably about 1810 to 15) and is of unusual delicacy, while it also displays many of the characteristic local details so evidently favored by Danvers builders. (*Drawings on page* 173.)

SOUTH EAST ROOM ON FIRST FLOOR
THE JAMES PUTNAM HOUSE—DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

South Front

East Gable End

THE JAMES PUTNAM HOUSE—DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

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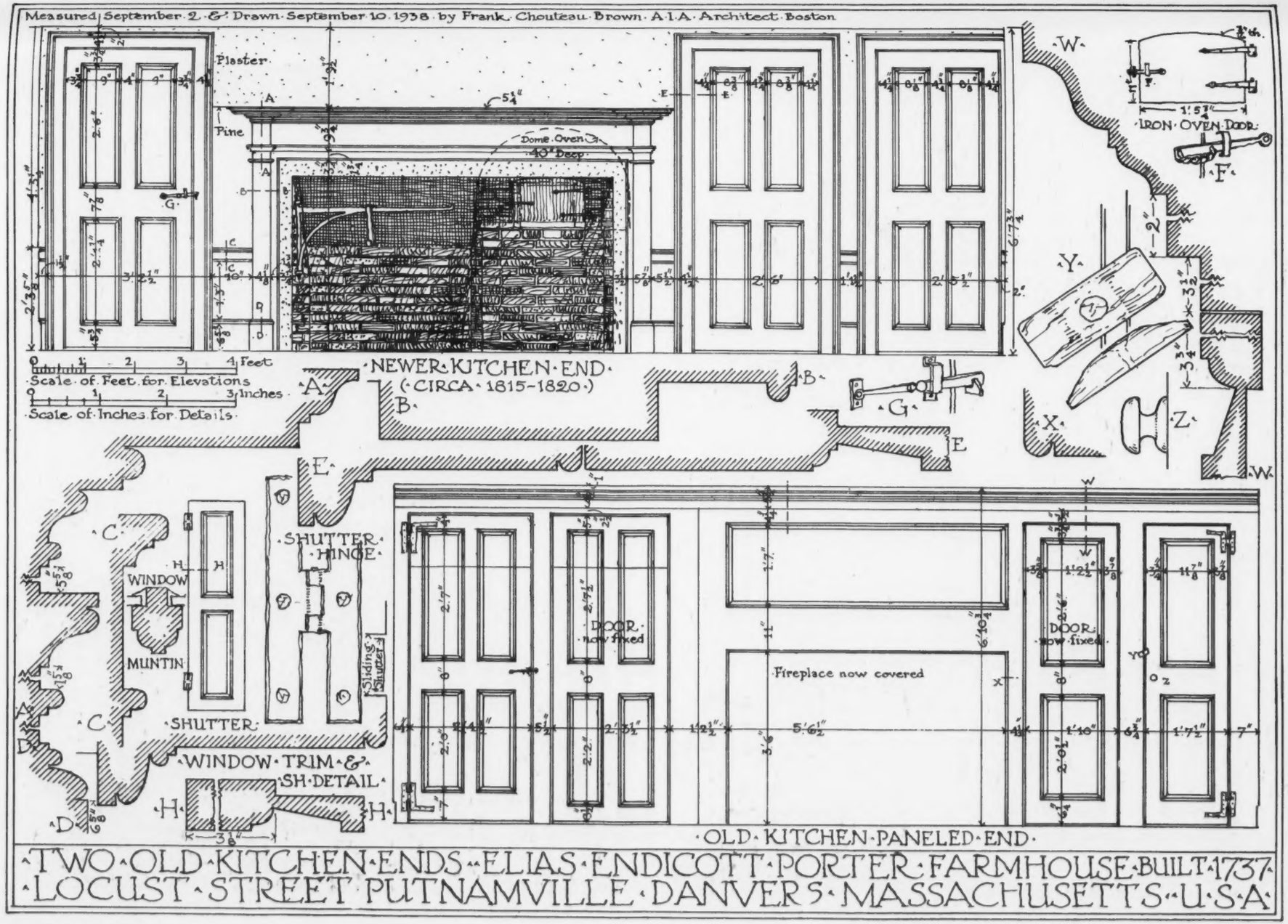
DINING ROOM

NEWER KITCHEN END—1815-20—(*Measured Drawings below*)

THE ELIAS ENDICOTT PORTER FARMHOUSE—1737—LOCUST STREET, DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS


Measured September 2 & Drawn September 10 1938 by Frank Chouteau Brown A.I.A. Architect Boston
Plaster
Pine
Dome Oven
40" Deep
Scale of Feet for Elevations
Scale of Inches for Details
NEWER KITCHEN END
(CIRCA 1815-1820)
IRON OVEN DOOR
SHUTTER HINGE
WINDOW
MUNTIN
SHUTTER
Sliding Shutter
WINDOW TRIM & SH DETAIL
DOOR now fixed
Fireplace now covered
OLD KITCHEN PANELED END
TWO OLD KITCHEN ENDS ELIAS ENDICOTT PORTER FARMHOUSE BUILT 1737
LOCUST STREET PUTNAMVILLE DANVERS MASSACHUSETTS U.S.A.

HOUSE AND BARNS

FARM BUILDINGS

THE ELIAS ENDICOTT PORTER FARM—1737—LOCUST STREET, PUTNAMVILLE, DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

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ENTRANCE HALL
"THE LINDENS"—1754—FORMERLY AT DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

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DETAIL OF FRONT, "THE LINDENS"—1754—FORMERLY AT DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

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